

OCT 4 1948

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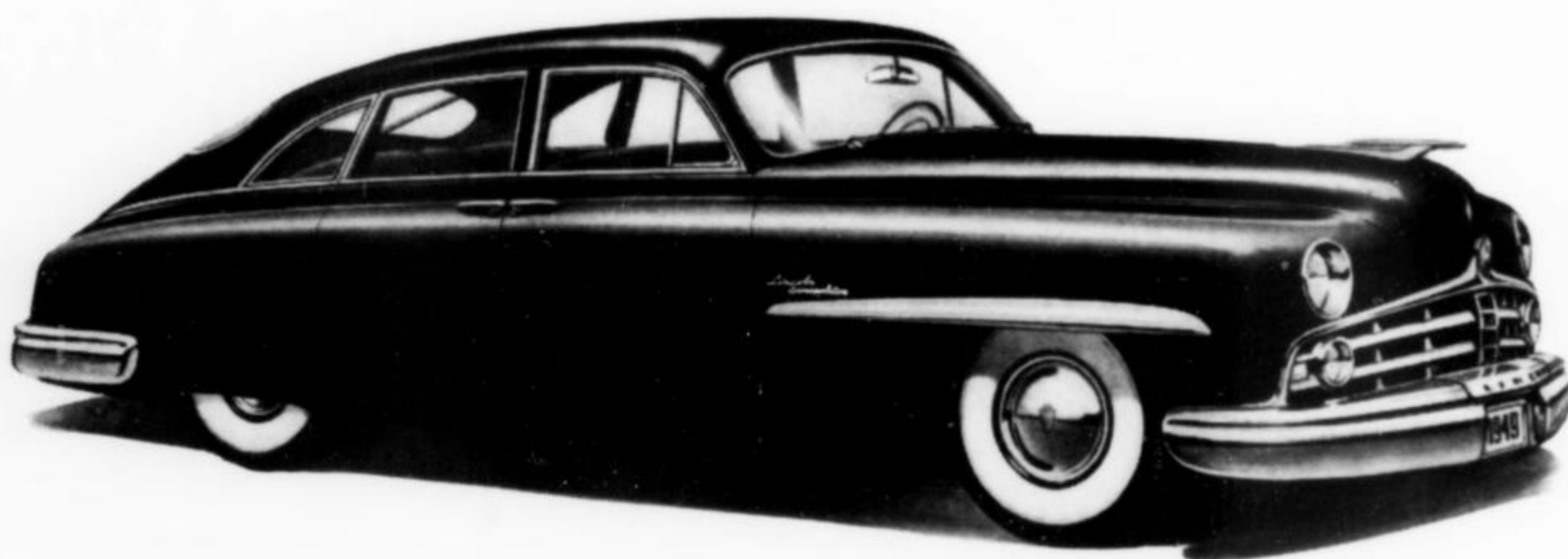
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COMMENTARY

THE FUTURE OF ARAB-JEWISH RELATIONS

The Key is the Cooperation of Equal and Separate States

AUBREY S. EBAN

THE peace on Israel's borders may be no more than the peace of a quiescent volcano; and the crisis of the state in its immediate external relationships remains unsolved. With this reserve, any friend of Israel would be less than human if he could not look back and indulge at least a brief twinge of pride. No political program in history has ever been assailed with such predictions of woe as partition and Jewish statehood. It would lead, said the

prophets, to chronic war. Yet for the first time in the whole story, Arabs and Jews face each other, with no foreign army between them, in conditions which seem to put war either beyond their political interest or their resources. The Jews would be massacred, said their friends (in tutelary concern) and their enemies (in gleeful and almost genuine belief). There is indeed much loss and bereavement in Israel; unless the black-bordered newspaper notices are kept in mind, the public mood cannot be accurately gauged. Yet by the precedents of history, it is hard to imagine a nation born out of conflict with less bloodshed.

Little is heard these days of holy war. The fire and brimstone of Arab speeches a few months back now appear merely pyrotechnic—as many, not always with confidence, predicted. The Arab chest-beating amidst strident calls for *Jihad* and crusade had become a little tedious even to those who advocated surrender to it. Thus, when the implacable furies, threatening to sweep all before them, become the abject recipients of alms at the very table of the Security Council, poetic justice is upheld.

It was said that a Jewish state could not arise amidst such hostility, or exist in economic separation from Arab Palestine. It has arisen; it exists. The newspapers and the official *Gazette* show the whole process

AUBREY S. EBAN, the representative of the Israeli government at the UN, has won respect in all quarters for his intellectual ability, the cogency and precision of his advocacy, and his rather unique blend of forthrightness and reasonableness of statement. He came to his present post with the advantages of a life-long absorption and participation in Zionist work, and with five years of service in the British Army. During World War II he was active in political and military service in the Near Eastern countries. Mr. Eban was born in Cape-town, South Africa in 1915 and was graduated from Cambridge University, where he later taught and did research in Arabic and Persian literature. He resided in Palestine and Egypt from 1940 until his present duties began. This is his first published article in an American magazine. He writes here, it must be understood, in an unofficial capacity; and his opinions are not necessarily the official views of the Israeli government.

and routine—judges and registrars being appointed, envoys dispatched and received, stamps and banknotes printed, ministers interrogated, police and army units inspected, men recruited and exempted, officers decorated and promoted, controllers of manpower, industries, diamonds, currency, food supplies appointed. This has all happened in three months. The machine of Jewish statehood has never for a moment looked improvised or transient. Nobody who suggests that all this can be revoked even expects himself to be taken seriously. The Mediator finds the existence of a Jewish government to be the only stable element in a scene where all else is fluid and confused. Where the prophets of disaster foresaw the prelude of a great-power conflict, we have the Soviet and American flags fluttering on the Gat Rimmon—with Israel's mediating banner in between.

IN DRAMATIC terms all this forms a well-rounded conclusion. But the curtain has not fallen; there is no assurance yet that Israel will live happily ever after. Support for Zionism in Europe or America can not fully compensate for the absence of a harmony with the immediate world in which Israel must live. This is not to underrate the achievement of Zionism in reconstructing an impressive system of international support starting from its low fortunes and precarious status in the spring of 1947. But when this is duly appraised, the need for a comparable political victory in the field of regional relations becomes even more obvious. Without that victory Israel can hope at the best for an armistice; never for a peace. The requirements of military preparedness and the effects of regional boycott will frustrate the initiative of a developing and thriving society. Having beaten off a violent siege, Israel may honorably aspire not to live besieged forever.

That Arab-Jewish agreement is a Jewish interest may be held a self-evident truth. Zionism cannot be accused of ever doubting that truth, even if its efforts to vindicate it often lacked the conviction and tenacity

which were usually devoted to other agreed Zionist objectives. What may now begin to emerge as a truth equally self-evident is the proposition that Arab-Jewish agreement is an Arab interest as well. Now this has never yet been held by the Arabs even as a perfunctory slogan. And it would be wrong to dismiss the Zionist Congress resolutions about Arab friendship, just because they remained mere words. For these words, rehearsed to the point of platitudes, had a deep educative effect. Every Zionist knew Arab-Jewish friendship to be at least an objective worthy of attainment, even if he did or could do little to attain it. Conversely, the Arab slogans that the idea of peace with Zionism must never for a moment be harbored in any patriotic heart have deeply affected Arab nationalist thinking and paralyzed its flexibility.

There has been no objective Arab attempt since the days of Feisal to weigh up the consequences of permanent conflict with Zionism against those of a harmonious accord. No less discerning a writer than Mr. Albert Hourani could bring himself to believe that the Arabs could live without Jewish friendship, while the Jews, once confronted with the Arabs in the absence of an intermediary, would need Arab tolerance so acutely that they would purchase it on Arab terms.

This view rested on what proved to be a wrong appreciation of the balance of power. The Arab League was deemed so to outweigh the total Jewish potential that all that was necessary was to leave the two parties alone, whereupon a unitary Palestine would arise as an act of Arab will, even without Jewish consent. When the Arab spokesmen were asked how they proposed to prevent Jewish Palestine from seceding, how to drive immigrants from its shores, to establish authority over its economy and industrial machine, to secure the allegiance of Jews for Arab-dominated legislation, they could only point amiably to the colossus of the Arab League which was to carry out these painful but brief operations by the strength of its hands.

It was the failure to prove this appreciation of relative power, as well as considerations of equity and conscience, which discredited the unitary state idea with every tribunal to which it was submitted. It was only by arithmetic that one could prove the theoretical capacity of the Arabs to rule all Palestine. By the really substantial criteria of relative strength they could do no such thing.

When the test came, the Palestine Arab leadership, which had claimed the right to dominate Jewish Palestine in the name of arithmetic, proved itself within a few weeks unable even to rally Arab Palestine into the semblance of an organized national group. It could not feed a village or defend a town or govern a local council. Its leaders, prudently distributed in the more remote and secure Arab capitals, exhorted their followers to "fight for a hundred years." But their followers, by the myriads, refusing to fight for a hundred minutes, followed their leaders into exile and destroyed even the arithmetical basis of their unitary ideal. The roles are now balanced, if not reversed. Arabs and Jews need each other for any progress or any escape from deadlock. If anything, Israel can more afford an attitude of self-sufficiency and plough a lone furrow, though it would be ill advised to seek that solitude or be satisfied with it. But the salient new fact created since May 14 is that the Arab world must either seek an adjustment with Israel or sink ever deeper into a mire of international discredit, social disturbance, and political upheaval.

PARTITION is in essence a theory of Arab-Jewish relations. The theory is that there are two peoples in Palestine, each with separate national aspirations; that neither can do without the full satisfaction of those aspirations, at least in a limited area; that each can best cooperate with the other on the basis of its own integrity and freedom; that the mutual elements of social and economic interest can only assert themselves in free and spontaneous contracts; that a tendency of unified life can only grow up, if at all, from

within and cannot be imposed initially from without; that between two national entities so organically distinct the ideal relationship is cooperation, not unity.

So much of this is axiomatic that it is staggering to reflect how hard the partition idea had to struggle until it overcame, one after the other, all the hurdles of international scrutiny and criticism. In the various United Nations organs the theory of separate national rights was repeatedly weighed in the balance against the formulas of unity—federation and confederation. History can show no federation which ever grew up except by the voluntary union of separate and independent units. "It is hardly possible to impose unity without consent," declared the Canadian representative, with whom a federal way of thinking was the point of departure. A member of the Peel Commission has told me that he and all his colleagues, in writing their report, were conscious of advocating a pro-Arab solution. The United Nations Special Committee too was not absorbed in a pro-Jewish conspiracy. That partition offered something infinitely precious to the Jews should not obscure the gifts which it bestowed upon the Arabs. A new unit of Arab independence was to be created in addition to the seven already existing. Nine hundred thousand Arabs who form three quarters of Palestine's Arab population were offered the chance of living in a purely Arab state. Two purely Arab states—Transjordan and Arab Palestine—were to be established on seven-eighths of the territory originally set aside for the Palestine Mandate with its "primary purpose," as the Royal Commission testified, "of establishing a Jewish national home."

In the approaching weeks many a Palestine Arab may come to compare this prospect, which was peacefully available, with the results of the "holy war." These results include the invasion and decimation of Arab Palestine; the panic-stricken flight of its population with its leaders in the van; occupation by rival Arab armies with frank aims of annexation; social and economic disintegration; and the collapse of all corpor-

ate Arab life. In this manner have Palestine Arabs been saved by their Arab "friends" from their Jewish "enemies."

The rescuers themselves are not unscathed. Nailed to inaction by the Security Council's resolution, they face the clamor of their disillusioned public, the burden of a refugee problem, and the awkward interrogations which are the lot of all those who lose a war, whether "holy" or secular. That an understanding with Israel may hold more benefit than this is a thought that cannot fail to intrude into thoughtful Arab minds. If self-interest is even a subsidiary motive of political action, the Arabs must come to the conference table soon.

ARAB-JEWISH agreement is partly a matter of subjective attitude; partly a function of objective interest. In the former realm, a revolution is necessary on both sides. For several decades Arab affairs were marginal in Zionist politics; and Arab intransigence was a blessed excuse for Jewish inaction. That intransigence was real enough; and in the absence of any Arab will for contact no Jew could do much more than condition himself for the eventual and distant day when he would be required to live a Middle Eastern life. But even this essentially educative process cannot be deemed to have been carried far; there is as yet no adequate sense of Arab environment, although in recent years, as the Palestine-born youth grow to maturity, a franker relation with that environment has come to appear.

There were two schools of thought in the Yishuv on the question of an Arab accord. The predominant school argued that agreement would only follow the creation of accomplished facts. The Arabs would accept the Jews only if the Jewish existence clearly became firm and irrevocable. Therefore any growth in Jewish strength, every token of stability brought the day of agreement nearer. Fortified by this realism, a Zionist could plunge into the tasks of Jewish consolidation with a clear conscience about the Arab-Jewish future; and could even prove that a concession at the expense

of Jewish stability was a factor against agreement. The second school argued for prior consent. It insisted that a formula or device, be it parity, bi-nationalism, federalism, was available whereby Jews and Arabs could be drawn into at least a mood of acquiescence in the main aspirations of each other. If this were so, then a slackening of Jewish consolidation was the road of enlightened self-interest.

The first school could afford to forget about the Arabs; the second often forgot about the Jews, and made the wooing of Arab favor its primary concern. In a just world, those who gathered around Magnes, Kalvarisky, and Hashomer Hatzair might, on the merit of their more specialized and conscientious interest, have deserved to be the architects of Arab-Jewish agreement. But the world is more realistic than just. The doctrine of "accomplished fact" has been entirely vindicated against that of "prior consent." If Arab-Jewish accord is anywhere on the horizon, the credit belongs to those who proclaimed an independent Israel on May 14. In that deed they established the Jews in a status of political equality with the surrounding Arab world; and equality is the keynote, the very crux and core of the Arab-Jewish problem. By defending what they had created, Israel's founders made a strong case for those Arabs who wished to portray the existence of Israel as a dictate of history beyond recall. And let there be no mistake. An Arab cannot sit with Jews until he has proven there is no other way. By its logic and history, Arab nationalism can only seek a solution by peaceful means—when no other means are available.

It is the Arabs, not the Jews, who give validity to the doctrine of accomplished fact.

In September 1947 when I was attempting (with complete failure) to persuade Azam Pasha of the virtues of prior consent, he swept all argument aside with his doctrine of historic fatalism. "The Jews will have no state unless they obtain and hold it. By the logic of our history we shall

fight it. Unless you can first resist the entire Arab world you cannot even be entitled to discuss agreement. We once had Spain and Persia. If anyone had come beforehand and asked us to surrender Spain or Persia he would have received the same negative response as I now give you." In a later moment he confessed that the Arabs had become used to not having Spain and Persia. They might, he said, become used to not having part of Palestine—or else they might attempt a century-old irridentism and work up a crusade. Azzam Pasha, not predicting the sudden collapse of Arab tenacity, advocated the crusade rather than post-factum acquiescence. For prior consent he had only contemptuous things to say. He would never qualify for membership in Ihud.

THERE is no conference table yet, although the Arabs are certainly negotiating with the fatal Provisional Government of Israel, in that they deal with a Mediator who knows no other Jewish body. (It is only in London that the existence of the Provisional Government is veiled in euphemism, though not denied. Anglican worshippers presumably bow down to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and the "Jewish authorities.") At the moment the future of Arab-Jewish relations can only be envisaged in principle and outline.

The principle of political separation of Israel must obviously now prevail. The mystique of Palestinian unity has already done much harm in the decade following the Peel Commission, which reported that to imagine that Palestinian unity has any moral meaning "is a mischievous pretence." Indeed a body calling itself Ihud was sterile by its very name. Unity and cooperation are not kindred ideas; they stand in sharp antithesis—and the former is as false to this relationship as the latter is true.

For years the moral frontiers between Israel and Arab Palestine have existed in every zone of politics, economics, society, and culture. In all but the legal sense, to go from Tel Aviv to Nablus was to cross a wider boundary than from France to Ger-

many. An advocate of Franco-Teutonic unity would rightly be deemed a crackpot, while a champion of Franco-German cooperation is an aid to sanity in a distracted world. Yet high-minded people, cherishing the hope of peace, beguiled themselves for years with the pretence that Israel and the Arabs were or could be *one* people.

Those who argued that they were two peoples, who should recognize their distinctiveness—and having recognized it, cooperate—were called "extremists." One state was regarded as automatically better than two. Sovereignty was "antiquated," although in 1945 it was canonized in the Charter as the basis of the United Nations. Yet all this time the doctrine of political independence and regional cooperation was becoming the typical 20th-century ideal of international relations. In the Benelux Union, the Statute of Westminster, and the Pan-American Union, political separation was accepted as the prior condition of regional cooperation. The Netherlands representative at Lake Success had said this well: "Although our two peoples had very close ties, relations, and interests of a cultural, historical, ethnological, and economic nature, this unitary state ended rapidly and unsuccessfully. The differences between Arabs and Jews are much greater than those between Belgium and the Netherlands. . . . Now together with Luxembourg, those countries are reunited not politically but economically, and what counts now is not our political separation but our union for economic purposes. . . . History has taught our three countries this valuable lesson of independence combined with unity for certain important but limited purposes."

The argument is reinforced nearer home. For even the members of the Arab League, united in language, culture, and religion, make the safeguarding of their separate sovereignties their primary ideal. While Dr. Charles Malik exhorts the Jews to be swallowed up and peacefully digested by the Arab world, his own Republic of Lebanon, far less differentiated than Israel from its Arab environment, clings to its own sepa-

rate independence as an essential condition of its integration into the Arab world.

THE rise of Israel as a non-Arab nation and the existence of large non-Arab groups throughout the Fertile Crescent gives the idea of Near Eastern unity a new direction. It must be unity founded on a regional, not a racial basis. The ideal is not an Arab League constructed, as at present, on the basis of racial exclusiveness; but a Near Eastern League, comprising all the diverse nationalities of the area, each free within its own area of independence and cooperating with others for the welfare of the region as a whole. Once the criterion is geographical and not historical, it becomes possible to envisage Turkey, Christian Lebanon, Israel, and Iran as partners of the Arab world in a league of non-aggression, mutual defence, and economic cooperation. But if this is to be, Count Bernadotte, King Abdullah, and others had better forget about "confederations." The very word recalls the failures of the 19th century to face up to the exigencies of national independence movements. In every modern example of regional cooperation, the members cooperate only provided that they do not have to; a statutory provision or a joint board is fatal. The British dominions consult with increasing intimacy on all problems; but any effort to establish a fixed consultative machine is suspiciously resisted. Yet, once the State of Israel was in existence, the inveterate "unifiers" began to sigh for a set-up along the lines of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Had he been alive at that time, each member of Ihud would not merely have been watching the decline of the Empire; he would have been applauding every secession as a liberal victory. There is no formula valid here except that of separate political independence combined with regional cooperation.

ISRAEL'S economic contribution to Arab progress is a matter of example rather than of direct influence. In her thoughtful study, *Land, Disease and Poverty in the Middle East*, Miss Doreen Warriner takes

exception to the description of Arab society as feudal. She points out that feudalism had a sense of social responsibility, which the typical Arab social structure entirely lacks.

The social disabilities of the Middle East spring from no lack of resources or potentialities, but from obsolete methods of organization, distribution, and technique. The primary changes affecting Arab society are a rapid population increase and a tendency of urbanization, with a consequent shift from primary to secondary and tertiary occupations. Urbanization has not proceeded on anything like the European scale. In four decades of Western contact the urban population in Iraq has risen from 7 per cent to 9 per cent, and in Egypt from 9 per cent to 13 per cent. In Syria and the Lebanon the urban population has remained constant at 20 per cent. In the Arab sector of Palestine there has been a large absolute growth of both rural and urban population, but the relation between the two has remained constant.

Now this growth of population has not been accompanied by an expansion of resources or a development of techniques, as it was in Europe. Increasing multitudes have striven to subsist on static resources of wealth. The 3.5 per cent of Egypt's land which is regarded as cultivable must somehow sustain a population of 17 millions, as against 9 millions fifty years ago. The peasant's allotment grows smaller and smaller, obsolete methods of cultivation persist, and a rock-bottom of decline is reached with an agricultural population, disease-ridden and drowned in debt, living on an average *per capita* income of twenty dollars annually. This Arab poverty is so extreme that instead of becoming an incentive to reform it produces an apathy which forbids all changes. "The vast majority," writes Cleland, "have diseases which enervate their bodies and dull their minds, and diminish their ambitions to a sufficient extent so that they have no courage to face an adventure into some unknown area where they might improve their condition." Here we have the

phenomenon, rare in the Middle Eastern life, of a growing population extracting a dwindling subsistence from static resources. The usual pattern is quite different; it is of vast potential wealth and a population too meagre in numbers and poor in equipment to exploit it. The most startling example is Iraq. In Western terms, here is wealth untold—of land and power and water. But the social historian turns away from this potentiality to a disappointing reality. "The splendor of the past," wrote Zwemer, "can scarcely be believed because of the ruin of the present." The ruin is more concretely expressed in terms of a 60 per cent infant mortality, an average expectation of life of twenty-seven years, and 80 per cent of the population living below the annual subsistence level of fifty dollars per head. And this is at one extremity of the justly named Fertile Crescent, at whose other end the Lebanese villagers in many parts subsist on four piasters per day per head.

In Palestine there is the unique circumstance that a society based on scientific agriculture, skilled industry, and social cooperation is constructing itself upon the very doorstep of the Arab world. It has all the recommended ingredients of a Western society living in the Middle East; but it is not an Arab society. In a sense the problem of Hebrew culture and society is the mirrored opposite of that which the Arab world confronts. Arab society starts off with an Eastern environment to which it endeavors to adapt Western ideas. Jewish society starts off with Western ideas, which it must contrive to adapt to an Eastern environment. There is an objective historic harmony in this relationship, a basic affinity, more profound than the transient political deadlock which obscures it. The fact is that the Arab East needs scientific agriculture, the development of industry on the raw material of skill, the establishment of cooperative institutions, the harnessing of applied research to regional problems of health and development. No process which exemplifies these things is alien to its interest. Nor would it

be considered so if the political institutions of the Middle East expressed the ethnic and cultural diversity of the area, instead of imposing a spurious homogeneity based on one of its cultures, which has a right to predominance, but not to monopoly, in political rights.

The Near East has no alternative between a New Deal and a revolution. Israel may be the agent of the New Deal; and Arab minds which scoffed at social reform as an ideal in itself may come to accept it as the lesser evil when weighed against an otherwise inevitable upheaval.

THE frontiers demarcated on November 29 were based on the assumed necessity to create a separate and viable adjoining Arab state. If the effective occupation by King Abdullah becomes formalized, the collapse of this assumption will re-open the boundary question. West Galilee, now without its Arab population, is an obvious case for revision. Jerusalem, in effective Israeli control and territorially connected with Israel proper, will be difficult to internationalize, so long as the Trusteeship Council evinces its present apathy and the United Nations cannot even muster a thousand police. The Negev is likely to be the chief counter in territorial bargaining; and Israel's advantage lies in the certainty that nobody else will be able to show promise of development or irrigation there. In any boundary revision, the guiding principles of change are fixed by the military situation and the increase of the Arab hinterland through Transjordan with a consequent possibility of greater self-sufficiency in each of the territories.

The past three months have proved that the economic interdependence of all Palestine was much overrated by the General Assembly; the Israeli administrative services show no sign of handicap through being separate and free. If the neighboring unit is dominated by Transjordan, the contrast between centralized industrial Israel, and the loose-knit village structure of Arab society may be more significant than the need

for common social forms. The economic arrangements between Syria and Lebanon, or the Netherlands and Belgium may be a truer guide than the rigidities of an economic union in the fullest sense. To the task of economic reform is added that of mass resettlement. Nobody would have suggested the uprooting of Arab thousands deliberately in order to fulfill a tidy demographic plan. But after the event it is surely just as quixotic to recreate the huge minority problem which was partition's chief defect, at a time when the underpopulation of Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan are among the main causes of economic paralysis in the Near East.

THE disparate tendencies of Israel and the Arab states in international relations is largely a function of the war between them. Yet when Count Bernadotte advocated coordination of foreign policy between Israel and Greater Transjordan, he invited some scrutiny of the foreign policy of each. As long as Israel can hope to remain astride the gulf between the two worlds, it would be suicidal to abandon that posture. There are special ties and interests in Jewish life affecting Israel's foreign policy which have no application to Transjordan at all. Transjordan's foreign policy is at the moment based on gravitation towards a single ally, and complete military and financial dependence upon it. To "coordinate" this with Israel's United Nations orientation is an act of virtuosity. Here again it would be wise to avoid the determination to tie everything up together, to unite what God has put asunder, to seek an artificial unity where there is a natural divergence.

There is evidently no peaceful adjustment around the corner. The citizens of Israel have to learn to breathe the Eastern air and

be less nostalgic for Warsaw and Vienna. More serious still—the Arab world must undergo the full drastic crisis of recognizing Israel's permanence. Everybody who helps them towards that recognition is, in the historic sense, a friend of the Arabs. Mr. Bevin's attempts to lead a European coalition of Israel's non-recognizers are therefore as disastrous to real Arab-Jewish harmony as all his other efforts in that field.

In every field of Arab-Jewish relations, the keynote is the cooperation of equal and separate states—not the imposed union of divergent elements. In the social and economic problems of its environment, Israel has only to exist and prosper in order to play a catalytic role. Far from disrupting the existing patterns of inter-state cooperation, Israel's function is to broaden them beyond the narrow racial limits of the Arab League. The Arab League attempted unsuccessfully at Geneva to secure a United Nations edict for a Middle East Economic Commission with no Jewish participation. The absurdity of anything but a genuinely regional approach is herein blatantly revealed.

In international relations, it may be Israel's function to teach its neighbors how not to be satellites; a free nation may even refine oil. By strengthening their links with each other, both peoples may come to afford a less restless foreign policy, with the emphasis on economic and commercial interest, rather than a scramble for competitive support. The future of Arab-Jewish relations opens out in wide perspective only when two walls have been surmounted: the replacement of the truce by a peace settlement, and an effective if not a formal act of mutual recognition between Israel and an Arab authority able to guarantee peace on its frontiers.

A REFUGEE LOOKS AT ANTI-SEMITISM HERE

The Difference between European and American Patterns

ROBERT PICK

ONE day in the late 1930's, so the story goes, a newly-arrived refugee couple entered the grocery store of a small New England town and asked for oranges.

"For juice?" inquired the clerk.

"Did you hear what he said?" the woman whispered to her husband in German, hustling him out of the store. "For Jews? You see, it's beginning here, too. . . ."

Together with some more of its kind, that sad joke used to be told among refugees in those days, and evoked wan smiles.

Of course Europeans had always known that anti-Jewish feeling was far from negligible in this country. But, at some point or other, this knowledge had been buried under the wishful hope that the bestiality of German anti-Semitism had so aroused the abhorrence of American Gentiles as to purge them of it altogether. In daydreams, the fugitives may even have expected to meet a kind of warm-hearted equality.

But side by side with this fantasy, there was always the uncontrollable anxiety at what the future might bring. They were

COULD it happen here? Is America as susceptible to violent anti-Semitism as Central Europe? Or are there certain factors in American life that serve as a bulwark against this particular irrationality? ROBERT PICK here looks at these perennial questions through the eyes of the refugees who came here fleeing Hitler, and offers some tentative generalizations winnowed from the hopes, fears, and observations of these newcomers. He was born in Vienna in 1898 and came to the United States in 1940. He has published two novels in Europe and one in this country (*The Terhoven File*, Lippincott, 1943). In 1946 he was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship and he is now working on another novel.

haunted by a ghost from other shores, which at any moment they feared to see here. To be told that anti-Semitism was only one aspect of American racial prejudice offered no relief whatsoever. (And understandably so!) The hate-sheets of the German-American Bund were read almost eagerly—with a kind of morbid fascination—and the sinister goings-on in Yorkville were a subject for unrelieved brooding. "You see!" At the least touch of reality the daydream turned into a nightmare.

AT THE same time, the newcomers' jitters were soothed by certain special characteristics of American life—taken for granted by any native-born person, but discoveries for them.

Wherever anti-Semitism had become powerful (and consequently violent) in Europe, it had received some encouragement from "above." I seem to recall that what upset my father most about the rise of Dr. Lueger's Christian Social party in Austria was the report that the old Emperor Franz Joseph, after some stalling, had confirmed that "*Radauantisemit*," Lueger, as the mayor of our Vienna, and by having granted him an audience had made him "respectable." (Not until about thirty years later, when Hitler's audience with Hindenburg legalized Jew-baiting in Germany, did I realize how justified was my father's excitement over that piece of dated court news.) It is futile to speculate whether continental anti-Semitism would have remained on the fringes of public life had it been denied the blessing from "above." But to a refugee from government-condoned—indeed government-decreed—Jew-killing, this was the fatal sign.

Imagine the relief, therefore, when the refugee observed that political anti-Semitism is not considered respectable in America. He noticed it in the total lack of anti-Semitism on the part of the government and in its absence from the platforms of the two great parties. Even more impressive, such anti-Jewish utterances as occasionally did come from a man in public life exposed that man to protests from other than Jewish quarters, and—more important—to general ridicule. Finally, there was the novel American phenomenon that conservative or even “rightist” political views do not necessarily imply a program of political anti-Semitism.

The refugee's encounters with the authorities reinforced this favorable impression. In Europe, even when or where anti-Semitism had little political or social sanction, Jews had never been entirely free from the feeling of being kept at arm's length in their contacts with the machinery of state. The lower ranks of the civil service, traditionally recruited from a social class that had been losing ground ever since the industrial revolution, expressed their malaise through anti-Jewish sentiments. Ranging from “correct” stand-offishness and “jovial” pin-pricks to avowed hostility, their attitude took the form of what might be called “administrative anti-Semitism.” It did not take the immigrant long to realize that no such dissatisfied hereditary bureaucratic caste exists in this country. His contacts with officialdom were necessarily numerous; the variety, ethnic and otherwise, of types he met on these occasions served to reassure him; and, oversensitized though he was, he was never aware in these dealings of any trace of anti-Semitism.

Along with the absence in the new country of some of the most dangerous anti-Semitic features of the old, there was the relative absence of innuendos in the new language, even for those who understood it. Such anti-Jewish abuse (“kike” or “sheeny”) as an immigrant may have run into—on a bus, in a waiting line—

seemed to apply to him in a less personal way than similar profanity in his native tongue (“*Saujude*”) familiar to his ears since grammar-school days. For a while he could even choose to live in the illusion—shades of the pathetic old Jewish game of West vs. East (and vice versa)—that these insults were not really meant for emancipated Jews from Central and Western Europe anyhow!

HOWEVER, at the same time that he made this important discovery, the refugee was confronted with a less agreeable feature of American life: social discrimination. What was especially frightening was its inflexible, formal, and well-nigh formalistic enforcement, with the hopelessness inherent in the situation; there was no chance at all for that typically European escape by means of the personal “exception”—the Jew who was an “exception.” Indeed, it seemed that anti-Jewish “rules” were tightened precisely at the moment when an “exception” threatened to establish a precedent. Gradually the refugee came to feel that there must be more to it than an emotional aversion to “mixing with Jews.”

If one keeps in mind the slow rise of European Jewry, the rigidity of American discrimination might seem to be accounted for primarily by the comparative speed of individual economic climbing in this country, and by the feeling that social graces and agreeable manners usually lag behind material betterment. It might, after all, be a case of taking no chances. Yet chances are taken all the time with Gentile self-made men, and no such prejudice is placed in their way.

About ten years ago, when refugees began to appear on the streets of London, a tabloid published a short editorial admonishing them to emulate the late Sir Philip Sassoon, who, as was acknowledged everywhere, had been second to no Gentile gentleman in the realm. Surely such nonsense would never invade the pages of an American paper. At the same time, how-

ever, the loophole implied in that admonishment is absent from the American kind of social discrimination, which seems to believe that no Jew can ever hope to live up to the standards of a Gentile gentleman.

On the other hand, the refugee also discovered that in certain areas the theory seemed not to obtain. For instance, the American world of letters, music, and the arts generally—and not only its “progressive” sections—was free from discriminatory habits. (Much more so, incidentally, than the corresponding groups in many a pre-1933 European country.) Scientific research proved to be another such oasis. It can hardly be a coincidence that wherever a group’s professional pursuits go beyond the mere struggle for wealth, power, and prestige, discrimination remains a matter of personal taste, and has no need, nor any use, for a code. Apparently social discrimination, as practiced, is intimately allied with the attempt to protect the prerogatives of vested economic power (i.e., power independent of individual talent or capacity) by rigid exclusion of potential competitors.

Having noted the exceptions, the émigré still found social discrimination a serious and ominous phenomenon. All the more surprising, therefore, was the blithe indifference his American co-religionists seemed to display to it—“innocuous social anti-Semitism,” they called it. He did not appreciate that their childhood background, their training, their aspirations, and their ways of life had become adjusted to the prevailing taboos. Few American-born Jews pick “non-Jewish” fields for their careers, or go where they “are not wanted.”

As a matter of fact neither did Europeans. But, as it happened, the occupations traditionally non-Jewish on the Continent did not always coincide with those that are closed to Jews in this country. The émigré industrial engineer or oil expert saw his talents wither in neglect in America, while he watched his fellow-immigrants in non-*verboten* fields overcome in due time the

newcomers’ general handicaps. “I wonder,” such a man said to me, “am I still rejected as a foreigner, or already discriminated against as a Jew?” He found small solace in the fact that some of the occupations least accessible to Jews in most European countries—such as the civil service—here admitted Jews freely. He only saw that the people who dominated business in his own field were the same who excluded him from their social activities and their neighborhoods—as did, on lower levels of income and social life, the people in their employ. To such unlucky émigrés anti-Semitism could not but seem alarmingly widespread and systematic.

MANY a newcomer, then, found discrimination strange, hard to cope with in everyday life, and boding ill for the future. At the same time the image of his immediate European past grew dimmer, and he would—with a kind of qualified nostalgia (a hypothetical nostalgia not for a place left, but for a time gone)—recall the feeling of certitude which, within the basic discomforts of being a Jew, had characterized his life in Europe before Hitler.

It was not that, actually, the images of the recent great tribulations grew dimmer. They changed, as it were, their specific weight within the sum total of the exiles’ reminiscences. (A refugee is both an immigrant and an exile.) Nothing could efface from his mind the tragedy that had marred his life, and kept destroying the lives of relatives and friends overseas. However, at times the ex-European came to look at the events of 1933 as an isolated catastrophe which, intrinsically, had very little to do with his “normal” pre-1933 existence. And that “normalcy” was the handy yardstick by which he measured the “normalcy” of his new surroundings. What often resulted—needless to say, it did not result exclusively from the refugees’ concern with anti-Semitism—was their ill-famed “*bei uns*” attitude. *Bei uns* it was better. But that *bei uns* which so of-

fended Americans really always referred to an earlier, fairer time.

For generations, poets among the Sephardic refugees in free, prosperous Holland continued to extol the beauties of Spanish life, as restored to pre-expulsion "normalcy" in their mental image; and the Inquisition had no place in that image. Apparently this is the way the human memory works. The London of the early 1790's, for instance, resounded with stories about the eternal "*chez nous*" comparisons with which the French émigrés annoyed the British. Surely these Frenchmen had not forgotten the guillotine they had slipped away from; they just no longer thought of it as part and parcel of their lost land.

What other way has man of assessing the new than to compare it with what he knows? Some instances exclude comparison: no one can balance the inconveniences produced by American poison ivy against those caused by the European species, for there is no similar plant in Europe. Anti-Semitism there is, and was, on both sides of the Atlantic. The trouble is that one of the two phenomena thus measured is removed from time and space and subjected to the miraculous pranks of the human memory, while the other is a reality that no miracle can change. Let me add that these reminiscences are about as much trouble to the newcomer himself as they may be to his impatient listeners. But you can't ask thoughts to "go back where they came from."

ON a trip to Holland shortly after the First World War, I was told that upper-class Amsterdam Gentiles usually picked a Friday night for their social goings-out because they were reasonably certain that Jews would stay in their homes then for the Sabbath observances. Although I took such things as "anti-Semitic resorts" or "places patronized by anti-Semites" for granted in my native Austria, I was rather shocked at such segregation by the clock. Many years later I asked a Dutch Jew in

this country about that habit. He declared that my informant had been pulling my leg. "But you, for instance, did you stay in on Friday nights?" Yes, he said, come to think of it, he did. "But if I hadn't no one would have dreamed of preventing me from entering any place I'd have chosen."

There is an important point illustrated here. Only the most stubborn diehard will deny that—with all its historical and regional mitigations—anti-Jewish discrimination existed in pre-1933 Europe on public, social, and economic levels. Before the growth of racist theories, however, it regulated itself almost automatically. The tenacity of traditions on both sides—though not necessarily of religious traditions on the part of the Jews—led to what may be called an incidental and largely unconscious cooperation with the segregatory customs of any particular place and time. The slow emergence of the Jews from self-segregation, as a rule completed in the third post-ghetto generation, went but slightly ahead of the preparedness to accept them on this new plane.

Had they, by and large, arrived at a satisfactory *modus vivendi*? In answering this question one has of course to keep in mind men's natural accommodation to even the most estranged environment. Beyond that it may be said that what made the European Jews' *modus vivendi* seem satisfactory, in the face of all pressing discomforts, was the hope that they had not yet reached the end of the road on which their 18th-century ancestors had embarked. That road had led from tolerance to emancipation, from emancipation to civic equality, and from civic equality to an appreciably lessened popular prejudice. The path grew narrower from there on, had its ups and downs, and zigzagged considerably. Still, as it appeared to the Jews, it was not cut off. Reverses could not wholly dispirit them. Their modern history had taught them to regard these reverses as temporary. The strength of that optimism was evidenced, pathet-

ically enough, by the fateful reluctance of so many German Jews to open their eyes to the realities of 1933.

Next to the apparently inherent march of history, personal achievements made significant inroads on the structure of prejudice. Those inroads bore both the mark and the stigma of "exceptions." If the Jews themselves were not always in full sympathy with their own *arrivistes*, the latter's attainments still were a favorable precedent for their hopes. The great role that the first of these inroad-makers had played in the 19th-century fight for civil rights had not fallen into complete oblivion.

An American-born Jew to whom I once mentioned this progress through "exceptions," referred slightly to those "Jews who love to be patted on the shoulder by Gentiles," adding that they had no importance for their co-religionists. On the strength of his experience he was probably right. Social discrimination is taken pretty much for granted as something intrinsic to American "individualism," and equality did not have to be fought for by the Jews in this country. In the absence of such a struggle behind him, and in the light of his accommodation to some of the uglier facts of life in America, this attitude was a perfectly natural one. The details were, of course, different, but it is clear that the American Jew, too, has made his own adjustment to anti-Semitism.

LIKE all earlier immigrants, whether Gentile or Jew, the refugees were, of course, resigned from the first to belonging for the rest of their lives to the minority of the foreign-born. The determination that some few may have had to live down that disadvantage did not survive the test of realities; even the most successful scientists and teachers and the most prosperous businessmen had to remain aware of the natural limits set to an adult's integration into a foreign, long-established community.

But whether successful or a failure, pros-

perous or still living in precarious circumstances, educated or not, the newcomer (like those who came before him) transferred to the lives of his children his never realized hope: to shed his minority status, to belong. So the unkindest cut of all was the discovery of anti-Jewish discrimination in the universities, especially since the actual stain of the "foreign-born" is not his foreign birth, but his foreign education and training—and understandably he wanted his children to rub off that stain and make the grade.

For once his "*bei uns*" reminiscences did not deceive him when, contemplating these restrictions, he saw in them hardships he had not had to cope with in pre-Hitler Europe. With the exception of Poland, Hungary, and—I think—Rumania, European countries knew no such barriers. In fairness it must be added that since all higher schools were state-supported, they had no means of putting religious or racial restrictions into practice without forcing the issue of civil equality, and that where regulations were lacking, chicaneries of all kinds frequently tried to enforce anti-Jewish tendencies. Yet in spite of such major inconveniences, Jewish students were able to avail themselves of the opportunity to enroll in the university of their choice.

From time to time an "objective" refugee may be heard maintaining that the quota system might serve to check harmful "anomalies" in the occupational stratification of the Jews, which in so many countries have fanned anti-Semitism. However, the marked concentration of Jews in certain departments of the economic and professional life of America might well be adduced as proof to the contrary.

Be that as it may, educational discrimination—both at the colleges' gates and on their campuses—is a major problem of refugee adjustment. The students themselves seem to cope with it with much less bitterness than their parents—or with about the same degree of bitterness as is felt by the average American-born student (to-

gether with about the same amount of Jewish *fierté de gueux*—pride of the oppressed). For the child of émigrés, the process of gaining familiarity with the powers that be is completed by college experiences, which show him in microcosm the exclusions and restrictions his life will be subjected to. The emphasis placed on the social part of college life reveals to him the economic and occupational importance of everything "social," including social segregation. Far from releasing him from his minority status, his full Americanization confirms it.

Belonging to an ethnic minority is a transitory stage for Gentile immigrant families. A particular "racial group" may for generations remain aware of its common stock, or may even (usually for religious reasons) shrink from intermarriage—and yet discrimination against such a group will wane, or at least not be adhered to generally. To all practical effects, such families lose their thinned-out minority status in the second or third generation. The descendants of Jewish immigrants, on the other hand, remain "the Jewish minority." Considering the present immigration rate, the Jews will remain, in the not too distant future, the only sizable white "minority" in a country whose ethnic plurality—aside from Negro-white—will be narrowed down to a Gentile-Jewish duality.

That is exactly the situation which European Jews fear. By and large, they come from ethnically homogeneous countries in which they represented the only minority. Whether or not that "homogeneousness" stood the test of history did not matter. As they rationalize the persecutions they were exposed to, they are tempted to assume that their mere minority status was as much to be blamed for their sufferings as was the fact that they were Jews. In short, the term "minority" has very unpleasant connotations to the Continental Jew.

No wonder that some of them come to feel they have to give their children a better start. They adopt a non-Jewish-

sounding family name, or even join a Protestant church. (I need hardly add that I am not talking of genuine religious conversions, or, on the other hand, of the antics that a handful of wealthy snobs and social climbers among refugees are known to engage in for the sole purpose of being admitted to restricted hotels or resorts.)

THIS is not the place to discuss the adaptability of refugees, or their alleged lack of it. It may be that the number of refugees who have felt the full impact of business discrimination is small. But however heterogeneous refugees are as a group, and however weak their sense of belonging together may be, all eventually learn the lessons taught to some.

They are likely to generalize. But generalization is not entirely unwarranted in the case of so general a phenomenon. Not that anti-Semitism is universal among American Gentiles; far from it. But the diffused effects of the segregatory code seem to the refugee so widespread as to have a marked general influence on the life of every Jew in the country. The whole of anti-Semitism is greater than the sum of its parts.

The picture which matures in the newcomer's mind looks something like this:

(1) Political anti-Semitism is an affair of the lunatic fringe of public life. *Weltanschauung* anti-Semitism is the exception rather than the rule.

(2) The rigidity of anti-Jewish discrimination is part (but only part) of the many-pronged struggle of the ruling classes to keep late-comers from rising to genteel wealth, power, and prestige—an aim common to ruling classes anywhere. The racial element infused into that struggle is not altogether accidental, but neither is it its core. The reason why that fight is nowhere, except against the Negroes, carried on with the same tenacity as against the Jews is the latter's age-old inclination toward progress through education, material betterment, and competitive business—

ideals they happen to share with American society.

(3) The effects of discrimination are indivisible: semi-consciously and unconsciously, social, economic, and political anti-Semitism work in a continuous interplay.

(4) On the whole, American anti-Semitism is less violent than the characteristically American lack of inhibitions would lead one to expect. It may well be that the petrified and petrifying inflexibility of the segregatory code, by reducing the number of Gentile-Jewish contacts, reduces the number of possible frictions and thereby vouchsafes a lasting safety-valve "harmlessness" to anti-Jewish feelings.

Some European immigrants feel that way. A very well educated friend of mine is wont to sum up our frequent talks on the subject by calling himself a "second-class" citizen, and in the same breath quoting Madame Mère's famous exclamation: "*Pourvu que ça dure!* (If only it lasts!)."

THIS kind of ironic resignation may account for the refugee's lack of interest in an open, organized struggle against prejudice. Like most continentals, the continental Jew is an individualist and a sceptic. Therefore much of the organized fight against discrimination—whether carried on from a purely pro-Jewish basis,

or within the framework of the fight against every kind of prejudice—is likely to appear to him naive, "unrealistic," or purely rhetorical. Even in the face of insuperable barriers he may prefer to fight alone, to rely on his personal gifts to overcome bias or secure a haven for himself.

As a former victim of the violence of the streets, he often wishes that the "whole question" would not be aired in public or even the word "Jew" pronounced in the marketplace. His own experiences have led him to the conviction that rational arguments have little power to destroy the mystical notions behind Jew-hatred.

But, after all, he forgets that that was in another country. America, when all is said and done, is not Germany. So he is apt to underrate the effect which, in the long run, rational arguments may have on that vast region of emotion, superstition, and semi-conscious pragmatism which is the hunting-ground of anti-Semitism in the United States where it is still an unthoughtful and casual phenomenon—neither intense, politically organized, nor respectable. It takes a European a very long time to understand that both indefatigable public discussion, including the voice of naive equalitarian faith, and the upholding of—and the struggle for—as yet unattained and seemingly unattainable ideals belong to the essence of American democracy.

THE U.S.-BRITISH ENTENTE ON PALESTINE

The Two Powers Join to Safeguard Israel

HAL LEHRMAN

DESPITE surface indications of ultimate victory over the Arabs, the friends of a Jewish state in Palestine still walk in dread of some sinister diplomatic maneuver to undermine or reverse the happy ending of the first chapter in Israel's brave new history. They are not entirely precise about the nature or the source of the anticipated hostile thrust. Perhaps, they say, it will be the State Department, sabotaging the White House by covert action in the Middle East or delaying a settlement beyond November in hope that a Republican triumph would give Washington's "Arabists" a clean slate for fresh skullduggery. Or it might be the British, awaiting the United Nations General Assembly in Paris in September to make a combined assault with the Moslem potentates on the whole idea of partition and the very existence of Israel. Whatever the source of the blow, it is said, a blow will fall as surely as Albion is perfidious and our Division of Near Eastern and African Affairs a society for the advancement of Islam.

Such forebodings are natural in any venture whose success has been almost too

IN THIS article HAL LEHRMAN once again offers a prognosis of American and British policy in regard to Palestine, drawing upon the same high sources which enabled him to predict the course of big-power diplomacy with such accuracy. The present article endeavors to outline for our readers the terms of the settlement which the United States and Britain have joined together to implement in Palestine, and which—if Mr. Lehrman again proves correct—should insure the safeguarding by these two powers of Israel's survival. Mr. Lehrman has written for British and American periodicals, and is the author of *Russia's Europe*, an analysis of Soviet expansion in the Balkans. He was born in New York City in 1911 and has been reporting on foreign affairs since 1934.

good to be true. Fear of treachery is especially understandable for the Jews, whose chronicles are measured off and divided by disaster. And it would be foolhardy indeed, in the light of the Great Powers' dismal record of twisting and turning on Palestine, to give hard and fast assurances that there will be no eleventh-hour turnabout, no last-minute conspiracy to plunder Israel of her prize. Nevertheless, there is some reason at this juncture to declare that what seems to be is real, that Israel's prospects for internationally-ratified independence are good, that the United States government is persuaded, the British reluctantly converted, and the Arab League in full retreat. Though the Arabs may continue for a time to go through the angry motions of a fight to the death, it will be mostly hopeful sound and fury to squeeze out a better bargain.

No one would foretell, in the interim month of August, how successfully the Tel Aviv regime would emerge from the wilderness of internal factional perils, economic stresses, and Arab-Jewish antagonisms into which the achievement of clear-cut sovereignty would plunge the fledgling state. But careful conversations with persons in various important places suggested that Israel would at least be given the chance to hack her way out of that wilderness. It was now possible to believe that not only the United States, as reported in these pages three months ago, but Britain and even the Arabs were finally convinced that the State of Israel was in the Middle East to stay.

UNCONTROLLABLE incidents and temporary recourse to violence, such as the outbreak after the Latrun explosion, might set the time-table back, but the position and the *long-range* forecast in mid-August (rely-

ing on informants who have not hitherto led this writer astray) could be legitimately summarized as follows:

1. Britain and the United States were now working in harmony and steady consultation for a Palestine settlement.

2. This settlement would have to include the perhaps unpalatable but certainly undeniable politico-military fact that a Jewish state existed.

3. This state could not be asked to suffer any impairment of sovereignty such as limits on its rights to welcome immigrants.

4. Certain territorial adjustments of the partition frontiers would probably be made, by mediation or preferably by direct negotiations between Israel and individual Arab states.

5. Neither the Arab League nor the Arab community in the Middle East would be required formally to ratify or even agree to the settlement, but they would have to observe it at least by refraining from further organized warfare.

6. In the event of refractory behavior by any Arab state, the machinery of the UN would mesh into gear to clamp an arms embargo on the offender.

7. It was hoped, however, that such action would not be needed, and that the Arabs would ultimately recognize the futility of resisting the militarily superior Jews, to say nothing of resisting the firm decision of a world organization.

8. Instead of a signed treaty, there would be an informal and indefinite *modus vivendi*, which would imperceptibly mature into a general peace.

9. The Jews would be expected to cooperate by accepting the internationalization of Jerusalem, giving a guarantee against expansion of Israel's final frontiers, re-admitting a manageable number of Arab refugees, and showing themselves amenable to customs unions, trade treaties, and other devices for attaining good neighborliness and rational economic connections with the bordering Arab countries in a prosperous Middle East.

10. As for the United States and Britain, their long-term objective would be to mend

their fences with Arabs and Israelis, both of whom they had rather thoroughly infuriated, and persuade and assist each of the antagonists to live productively side by side with the other—a policy designed to cement and fortify the wobbling Anglo-American defenses in a key area of world strategy.

THOUGH the repercussions might have been cataclysmic for their mutual and higher alliance on worldwide fronts, the British and the Americans had nevertheless come appallingly close to open rupture this spring over the Palestine dispute. Having escaped, they were now equally determined not to let it happen again. Each side had made an accommodation, since each needed the other in the Middle East.

A natural diplomatic reticence now attempted to conceal the fact that the weaker partner had yielded more than the stronger. Ostensibly, the emphasis was on "team-work": preliminary consultation to avoid contradicting each other in public, examination of every new problem in the light of the "common Anglo-American interest" and, above all, no major unilateral action. Everything was to be done inside and as part of the United Nations.

Actually, the Americans had imposed their main requirement—that Israel from now on must be regarded as a permanent element in the situation. The Americans would be willing to go slow, giving the British time to readjust themselves. On points of detail, such as the British protest to the Security Council in the case of the five Britons, each power would retain independence of action. But on the fundamental issue—Israel's survival—there was to be no more contention and no more cross-purpose.

Out of joint thinking certain conclusions had crystallized. The new entente could not yet know precisely what the outlines of the final settlement would be. But on two things both powers were firmly—one might even say grimly—resolved: that the UN should not tolerate a renewed state of open war in the Holy Land, and that

the Arabs had to make up their minds to accept the disagreeable reality of Israel's presence. And, since Israel was a sovereign entity, there could be no question of requiring her to curtail her sovereign privilege of admitting to her territory as many immigrants as she desired. It was hoped, for the sake of soothing the Arab fear of Israeli expansionism, that many Jewish DP's from Europe would find havens in countries other than Israel, and that her own limited economic absorptivity would place natural restrictions on the influx into Israel. But the *right* of unimpeded immigration had suddenly become so axiomatic and obvious to Anglo-American thinking that questions concerning it were received with wide-eyed surprise, as if White Papers and blockades had never been heard of.

The problem of revising the partition frontiers was frankly regarded as a simple exercise in horse-trading between Semitic peoples renowned for their skill in such matters. Fresh evidence of this talent seemed already discernible in the Arab Higher Committee's professed scheme to set up an Arab government for the whole of Palestine, as if partition and the military abandonment of extensive territory had not occurred. On the Jewish side, the same genius was clear in Israel's decision "permanently" to annex a land strip athwart Arab soil linking Jerusalem and the partition frontiers, and in Foreign Minister Shertok's announcement that the boundaries set by the UN would be changed "by adding territory, not by diminishing it." Britain and the United States would be happy to have Count Bernadotte mediate in boundary discussions. But if the two parties preferred direct talks, they would not object. UN prestige was considered as bound up with the reaching of a settlement, not with getting credit for it.

The partition frontiers, predicated on an economic unity which had not materialized, were now generally thought considerably less than sacred. The most likely modification appeared to be an exchange of Western Galilee for the Negev. By military conquest Israel already held most of the Galilee area

anyway. It offered fertile farmlands and a frontier with Lebanon which the Jews had always claimed to desire. As for the Negev, which is largely desert, UN insiders recalled that addition of this territory to the Jewish portion of partitioned Palestine had been almost an afterthought. Its cession would give King Abdullah his long-coveted access to the sea via Gaza. Egypt might make a bid for a slice of the Negev, but this was not likely to cause trouble in view of the lamentable Egyptian performance in the brief Palestine war, and since Egypt's real interests seemed to extend more logically westward toward Cyrenaica anyway.

A FORMAL peace treaty, it was believed, was improbable, if not impossible. The Arab potentates, who had promised their people so much and earned so little, had, so it was reasoned, become prisoners of their own propaganda. The danger was notably acute in Egypt and Syria. In more backward states like Saudi Arabia, the undeveloped condition of public opinion created less threat of organized popular reaction. But even Abdullah was not thought bold enough to show his lone hand openly. If the Arab League publicly admitted defeat, the least that was expected to happen was a bloody wave of ultra-nationalist, fanatical Moslem rioting. Apart from the ever-present worry about Soviet profit from the overthrow of any Arab government, one had to think too of the mortal risk to Christians and Westerners (not to mention Jews) adrift in the angry Moslem sea.

The best that could be asked was a sullen but decisive passivity from the Arab leaders, implemented by a gradual laying down of arms. In such a tapering-off of belligerence, the wily Abdullah was expected to be the prime mover. The most "pro-British" of all the Arab statesmen because of his dependence on the London exchequer, and the most confident among them because his Legion alone had scored any victory against Israel, Abdullah was also in line to be the heaviest, and perhaps only, Arab winner in any settlement. He would therefore be the

most eager to achieve it. He had already set a precedent for his colleagues in the Arab League by declaring Transjordan's readiness to consider "any possible compromise that secures justice and prevents unnecessary bloodshed."

If resistance were offered, it would come not from the League but from an individual Arab country or countries. For purposes of record I was reminded that it was physically possible for the Jews also to be the aggressor. It was thought, however, that the Israeli government would be competent to keep its own extremists in hand. And nobody seriously believed that the Tel Aviv regime itself, which had played its cards so skillfully at the international poker table, would ever blunder into a position of defiant illegality vis-à-vis the UN, even if goaded by provocations like the Arab sabotage of the Latrun water station under the nose of UN observers.

In the event of resistance, small-bore orneriness such as sniping and minor raids could be augustly overlooked. But operations involving large deployment of troops or artillery would bring the Security Council swiftly into session, I was assured, and make an arms embargo against the transgressor almost a "dead certainty."

When asked what further sanctions were envisaged if this embargo failed to halt a new war, my sources uniformly showed distress that such a question should be posed. This distress was due to the painfulness of trying to imagine what sanctions could be taken that would be effective and not harm the sanctioners more than the sanctionee. Imports of certain foodstuffs and manufactured products could be shut off, of course. But the average Arab was one of the most difficult persons in the world to bring to his knees by sanctions because he needed so little and could get along on even less. On the other hand, sanctions worked two ways, and the West still wanted oil.

HOWEVER, I was assured that the arms embargo would be quite sufficient. The Arabs knew the embargo would leave them

powerless to fight and win because it would deprive them of weapons and turn the enemy camp into an arsenal.

In fact, the Arab fear of an embargo seemed to be our ace in the hole for winning of the peace. The card, I was warned, should not be played too soon. In particular, the plank in the Democratic party platform calling for immediate lifting of the embargo on Israel would be a sheer disaster if implemented. It would mean unilateral American action against the Arabs, outside the UN framework. It would upset the delicate mechanism of the present UN campaign of skillful persuasion. It would make more difficult than ever the efforts of moderate Arab leaders to restrain their aroused peoples. Aside from dispersing the last remnants of American influence in the Middle East, the argument continued, our single-handed interference at this point would disperse the hopes for peace. It was therefore not only in the national interest of the United States to refrain from going too fast, but also in the real interest of world Jewry and even of Israel herself.

The Anglo-American entente had, it felt, solid ground for believing that even a UN embargo, or any other punitive action by the world organization, might never be needed at all—because the Arab leaders were beginning to see that they were already licked. The test in battle had exposed the inadequacies of their armies. To make things worse, the Arabs had squandered the initial advantage which they enjoyed in armaments. The world may have excoriated the British for building up the first Arab stockpile for war, but wasn't it clear now that Britain's pledge to halt the arms flow to the Middle East had effectively starved the Arab armies in munitions while Israel had been able to overtake and pass them?

Whatever the validity of this claim of British virtue, the evidence did show that Israel had certainly outstripped her enemies in fighting power. While the Arabs were floundering under financial embarrassments and Oriental inefficiencies, a well-heeled network of Israeli agents on several continents had

purchased and shipped and delivered. Field artillery and fighter planes had come in from abroad, while factories at home clicked into production of small arms, anti-tank guns, Sten guns, mortars, and even make-shift armored cars. Moreover, Israel brilliantly used the lull of the truces to train and expand her army, rationalize its structure, tighten its command, and even create a small navy. Finally, there was nothing the Arabs could do about the steady arrival of Jewish immigrants from Europe—estimated by some at 85,000 already in Israel—with 10,000 more due to enter every month hereafter under American Joint Distribution Committee auspices. These sober realities, it was felt, exposed the absurdity of such pompous pronouncements by Arab diehards as Jamal el-Husseini's scheme for a "federal" Palestine with a grandiose irrigation and reclamation program to be financed by, of all people, the penniless Arab population of the Holy Land itself. The more clear-headed Arab leaders would recognize the impossibility of imposing their will upon independent Israel in the face of the prevailing odds. They were expected to be all the more persuadable when convinced that, in addition to the Jews, stubborn Arab resistance would have to reckon with "broader" problems and "broader" forces—i.e., the displeasure and determination of a UN which, for once, was agreed and ready to act. But the Arabs would also have to hurry up if Tel Aviv was not to harden its attitude toward interminable truces and unending palaver. The explosion of Jerusalem's water-supply pumps vastly strained Israeli patience. The sharp Jewish demand for a definite term to the truce was an ominous storm signal.

WITH a modicum of Arab reasonableness, however, it was felt that Israel would hold off long enough to avoid eruption of hostilities on a scale big enough seriously to damage negotiations. After all, the Jews had enormous gains to make by biding their time. Undisputed statehood and the right of unlimited immigration constituted their two inflexible objectives. And both these require-

ments were already implicitly guaranteed to them in advance by the new joint Anglo-American policy.

In exchange, a major concession to peace would be Israeli agreement to an international trusteeship over Jerusalem. The Jews now held most of the city by force of arms, with a Jewish military governor and a police force integrated into the Israeli defense command. It was argued that relinquishment of authority would not be too large a surrender, since the Jews had already yielded Jerusalem under the original partition plan. The muscular talk from Tel Aviv could be written off as mostly bargaining tactics to prepare the way for a grand gesture of conciliation when Israel, at the proper moment, gave up a claim to Jerusalem which she had not actually intended to push. It was highly unlikely that she would risk alienating world opinion by insisting that Jerusalem, sacred to three religions, be under the domination of one.

The energetic stand already taken against Irgun and other extremist tendencies indicated that Israel would also be agreeable to quieting the Arab concern about future Jewish aggression by guaranteeing whatever frontiers emerged from the peace talks. And once the main issues were regulated, Israeli objections to taking back the Arab refugees—their menace as a fifth column and as a drain on the resources of a Jewish state at war—would lose their cogency, although it was clear that much fewer would return to Israel than had fled.

As for good neighborliness toward the Arab countries beyond the borders, any objective observer would have to admit that the organized Jewish community in Palestine had long demonstrated its desire for the opportunity to establish business-like and mutually profitable economic relations with the Arab world. In the past, unquestionably, the Jews had done overwhelmingly more for the Arab economy than the Arabs for the Jewish. There had been indication even in the middle of war that Israel was ready to give free port facilities to the Arabs in Haifa and captured Jaffa when peace came. There was

a genuine Israeli desire for any and all trade arrangements which would be of common benefit in the massive postwar task of reconstruction and stabilization.

THE optimism of the Western powers did not stretch to the point of hoping that more than an uneasy peace, punctuated with intermittent harassments by both sides, could arise from the heat and bitterness of the conflict. But the best prescription was the balm of prosperity, and Anglo-American policy could be expected to encourage economic collaboration to the maximum between the recent antagonists. Only so could Israel avoid isolation and contribute her full potential to tranquillity in the Eastern Mediterranean. And only by the achievement of working relations between Jew and Arab could the West look for improvement of its own ties with both, for otherwise a gesture of rapprochement toward one would be taken as unfriendly by the other.

That relations with the Arabs were at low ebb could be seen in the almost pathetic British efforts to win favor by small tokens, wherever it was possible to do so without disturbing the general line of the new Anglo-American policy. Thus London, while inwardly reconciled to the inevitability of extending recognition to Israel, was decidedly not rushing to do so a moment sooner than necessary. Some seven thousand Jews of fighting age sat wearily under British guard in Cyprus until their release to Israel could no longer be resented by the Arabs. And at Lake Success, Sir Alexander Cadogan, who had remained fairly calm before the spectacle of two hundred and fifty thousand Jews languishing for years in European DP camps, now suffered publicly and eloquently over the hardships of a slightly larger number of Arabs made into refugees a few months ago chiefly through the bellicose ambitions of their leaders. Similarly, the United States felt under compelling need to make what amends it could for the "betrayal" which the Arabs had already laid at Washington's door. As one American official plantively put it to me, "we hope the Jews will appreciate

that we have to get along with the Arabs too."

But the democracies would also have to devise some way of "getting along" with Israel. Israel nursed too many dour memories of Allied coldness, and too many sentimental memories of Soviet aid in her recent travail, for her to be counted entirely within the Western camp in any future global alignment.

Not that there was any present danger of Israel's taking on the complexion of a Poland or Bulgaria. There were too many genuine democrats and realists in high Israeli councils for that. But there were also factions of considerable weight which leaned toward Moscow out of a mixture of ideology, gratitude, and the habit of being anti-British. The best that could be awaited from Israel for the moment was the assumption of a middle or "neutral" position. Considering the Soviet adroitness in profiting from such situations, Allied policy could scarcely regard this arrangement as eminently satisfactory.

THE Kremlin, however, had considerably larger reason to contemplate with relish its new status in the Middle East. Only in one phase of policy had the Soviets met complete frustration. The UN last Winter had been lugubriously contemplating the distasteful subject of military intervention in Palestine, and the Russians, although never really close to seeing a Red Army contingent in an international police force, did get a brief glimpse of its possibility. In the end, by a combination of dexterity and accident, this boggy had been exorcised. The Palestine "mediator" was a Swede accompanied mainly by Swedes. The UN Truce Commission, an emergency outfit based on the available consuls in Jerusalem, was composed of the American, French, and Belgian consuls. There was no Russian consul. If the extra observers and police for whom Count Bernadotte had been clamoring were recruited, conceivably some Russians might be selected on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. But, barring the unlikely resurgence of the need for a large international force in Palestine, the possibility of a Red

Army detachment there in the near future was ended.

Nevertheless, Moscow had plucked substantial benefits from the *Sturm und Drang* attendant on the birth of Israel. Once upon a time the Eastern Mediterranean had been ruled by a Pax Britannica. This control had been a troubled one, but it had kept the area in a degree of stability. Now the area was in upheaval, the future chaotic and uncertain. Soviet Russia could now angle for the Jews, for the Arabs, or for both. The greater the unrest, the larger and more tempting her assortment of bait. Russia had also seen the Marshall Plan set back by interruption of oil shipments to the thirsty West and by serious delays in the exploitation of the area's oil-producing potential. Russia's reversal of policy toward a Jewish state—her championing of the cause at Lake Success, her help to the "underground" of immigrants and armaments—had given her more good will among Zionists and in Israel than a decade of propaganda. When Moscow's minister Pavel Yershov reached Tel Aviv in early August to open the first Soviet diplomatic mission there, the Hebrew press resounded with salutes to the "great event in the life of our young state."

Had Moscow not elected to abandon its anti-Zionist line, the outlook would have been black for a Jewish state in the Security Council debate before partition and in the dangerous months following. Israel certainly was grateful. Yet the men who led Israel's councils also knew that the Soviet change of line had come, not because of a sudden passion for Jewish freedom, but because of cold calculation on distant objectives. And Israel proudly felt that, though Russia had given her the opportunity, it was Israel who had grasped that opportunity and by her vigorous use of it had been able to turn a dream into a reality.

IF the UN now seemed at last determined to fulfill its function of safeguarding peace with justice, the Israelis considered that they deserved the credit for it. Israel, not the UN, had implemented the UN's decision on partition. Because of her resolution and sacrifice,

Israel now occupied the level in the UN's scale of values which the Arabs formerly had enjoyed. Once it had been the Arabs who needed to be accommodated, the Arabs whose rights in Palestine were an international obligation, the Arabs whose presence in Palestine was a factor limiting Jewish claims. Now, thanks to the valor of Jewish resistance, it was the other way around. Now it was Israel whose presence in Palestine was viewed by the UN (and by Anglo-American policy) as a limit on Arab claims. It was now up to the Arabs to adjust themselves to Israel and the UN.

This agreeable reversal, the Israelis believed, had not been inspired by abstract reasoning but by Israel's unrelenting capture of one political and military position after another in a bloody test of strength. In particular, it was said, the United States Army, Navy, and Air Force had been astonished, impressed, and convinced by the clear evidence of Arab impotence and Jewish power. According to report, Defense Secretary Forrestal was now busy explaining that he had been deceived by his advisors.

Under the circumstances, Israel's appreciation of the new American benevolence was seasoned with a dash of cynicism. And, although the friendly attitude of the American delegation in recent UN debates was a matter of deep satisfaction, the Israelis still found several harsh irritants in Washington policy: the delay in *de jure* recognition, the slowness of a loan to Israel, and the behavior of certain officials in the Middle East.

According to an American view, *de facto* recognition of the provisional government had been swift and effective, and there was no need for the further step until the regime had been endorsed by admission into the UN or, better still, by a regular election in Israel. But Israel wanted to know why the United States had lately become such a stickler for formalities. Hadn't the United States frequently given full recognition in the past to provisional governments, such as Kerensky's and de Gaulle's? Wasn't the present reticence a sign of a lingering pro-Arabism?

Israel urgently needed funds to finance her

vast program of immigration. I was authoritatively told that when a detailed loan project had been submitted by Israel to the Export-Import Bank, the Bank had replied that nothing could be done about it "for the time being." It was not true, as asserted in the press, that a Marshall-Truman break loomed over the loan question, but it did appear—or at least so the White House privately indicated—that the Bank had taken its go-slow decision without the President's knowledge. The President, having reacted promptly, as soon as the facts were disclosed to him, the Bank once more took the hundred million dollar project "under consideration."

Finally, the Israelis were complaining that the Arabs were deriving comfort and encouragement, not only from Washington's "legalistic" attitude on recognition and the loan, but from the strange conduct of American representatives in the field. There was a dangerous tendency abroad to give the Arabs "private" assurances that the United States really did not care much about the preservation of Israel, whatever might be said to the contrary at Lake Success. One of the most vocal in this campaign reportedly was George Wadsworth, who is to be our new ambassador to Turkey and who is a long-time outstanding "Arabist" in the State Department. The campaign was counteracted by the hard facts of American declarations at the UN, but it was feared that out in the Oriental deserts, where politics is traditionally devious, the Arabs might nevertheless be misled into further resistance by the delusion that our pro-Israel policy was merely a trick to win a domestic election.

THESE were some of the inconsistencies, as Israel saw them, between the public and "secret" diplomacy of the United States. Nor did Israel hope for noticeable improvement if and when a Republican President took office. A new administration, to be sure, could start life without the embarrassments of the present administration's old pro-Arab dossier and, in that limited sense, might feel free to act with brisker imagination. But pronouncements on Palestine by Republican

spokesmen had been no less "political" than those of Democratic orators. It was asserted that the first Philadelphia version of the Republican platform plank on Palestine, drafted by Senator Vandenberg, had been cautiously cold and formalistic toward Israel. Israel expected that a change of administration would merely prolong the existing so-called "bipartisan" policy with its disturbing brew of friendship above and intrigue below.

More neutral observers, however, might draw somewhat different conclusions from the general American attitude. No matter how slender a reed pan-Arabism had demonstrated itself to be, the Middle East was still predominantly peopled by Arabs. This was a phenomenon which American diplomacy, however resolved in support of Israel, could not safely ignore, it was contended. A loan and full recognition of Israel would come in good time. Meanwhile, prudence dictated avoidance of large pro-Israeli gestures except when these were not only opportune but decisive. In addition, whether tactically right or wrong, delay in granting urgently desired favors to the Jews could be useful in bargaining, and might render the Israelis more pliable to a settlement which would let the Arabs off as easily as possible. If the United States gave away too much too soon, there would be little left to trade for generous terms from a triumphant Israel toward her scattered and dispersed enemies. The United States had two clients in the Middle East, the argument went on. Her future status there depended in large measure on her success in persuading these two to live amicably with one another on the basis of a reasonable peace settlement.

Yes, the great and historic fact was that now there were indeed two clients. Formerly it was the Arabs who needed to be cajoled while the Jews sat outside, hat in hand. Now the hat had been replaced by a rifle. Once only a supplicant for benefits on grounds of justice and humanity, Palestine Jewry had grown able to demand and obtain its due on the strength of its achievement as an army, as a state, and as a new and pivotal element of power in the vital Eastern Mediterranean.

PERETZ: THE HEART'S SECRET PLACES

A Great Yiddish Writer on the Mystery of Evil

MAURICE SAMUEL

OF MAN'S first disobedience, of the dark corners of the human heart, of the small beginnings of great transgressions—of these and of similar things Yitzhak Leibush Peretz sang at length in his folk tales. He was endlessly fascinated by the problem of evil, by that human power of self-deception which covers the first departure from the right path, and by the subtle disguises which the Enemy of Mankind assumes. Sometimes he treated the subject somberly; sometimes his tone was light; somber or playful, he was always serious. The moral nature of man was the fundamental substance of his meditations.

It began in his boyhood. At the age of fourteen, a Talmud student in his native

ISAAC LEIB PERETZ (1851-1915) is, after Sholom Aleichem, the outstanding figure of Yiddish literature. A prolific author of poems, stories, essays, dramas, allegories, and satiric sketches, he is the realistic artist of Jewish poverty, the lyrical poet of Hasidism, a writer of social protest, a critic of institutional religion, a devout believer in the ethical-religious message of Judaism, and, above all, the great Yiddish folk-educator. When Peretz died in 1915, over a hundred thousand people wept at his funeral. MAURICE SAMUEL, who here writes on Peretz's early life and work, wrote the widely praised article, "Who Can Translate Yiddish?" in the June COMMENTARY. He is an outstanding translator and interpreter of Yiddish literature, and is the author of *The Great Hatred* (1940), considered one of the two or three best books in English on anti-Semitism; *The World of Sholom Aleichem* (1943), the recent novel *The Web of Lucifer*, and many other books. Mr. Samuel was born in Rumania in 1905 and was educated in England; he came to this country in 1915. This essay contains material which will appear in his forthcoming book on Peretz, *Prince of the Ghetto*, to be published this fall by Knopf.

Polish village of Zamoshch, he already knew the torment of doubt and self-questioning. He tells us, in his unfinished autobiography: "I went about distracted, a wanderer in the upper worlds, steeped in gloom, my thoughts and dreams occupied with the cosmic tragedy." *The Guide to the Perplexed* of Maimonides was his first handbook to the eternal riddles. "What is the purpose of man?" he asked himself. "Whence come sorrow and suffering, and what end do they serve? Is there such a thing as free will in man?"

AMONG his mature works there is a humorous sketch of two youths who, on a hot summer's day, steal away from *cheder* to bathe in the river; but while undressing on the bank they become so absorbed in philosophic discussion that they forget entirely what purpose brought them to this place. Much of Peretz's work is autobiographical; in the actual biography he himself frankly furnishes the key to a great variety of pieces—this particular sketch, *Back to School, You Rascals!*, among others. It is himself and a friend he is describing. There they sit, the two boys, their stockings half-way off, the cool water lapping at their feet, the sun blazing overhead, completely abstracted from the world about them.

"Do you know, Berel," says one of them, "I just can't understand what the great Rabbi Tam is driving at. According to him the Almighty doesn't want to humiliate man by offering him Paradise for nothing, as if it were a piece of charity. The point is, says Rabbi Tam, that man ought to *earn* Paradise without losing his self-respect. But what sort of humiliation is he talking about? When God gives me something, am I tak-

ing it from a stranger? Am I taking it from a human being, who is left with less? Does it cost the Almighty anything?"

"That's right enough," says the other, "and still, when you come to think of it, you're on a higher level if you don't get something for nothing, even from the Almighty—if you've earned it, if it's honest payment."

"But haven't the sages told us: 'Do not serve God as a slave does his master, in the hope of payment?'"

"That's quite a different matter."

The two young foreheads are wrinkled in thought, hands gesticulate, fringes of ritual garments fly right and left.

"All right, let it be payment. But what about punishment? What's punishment for?"

"But don't you see, it's for the same purpose—that man may be better, may repent if he has sinned."

"That's all very well for life in *this* world. But what's the sense of punishment in the *next* world?"

"You've got the answer right there, in Rabbi Tam. Punishment in the next world is for the purification of the soul, to remove the blotches which have gathered on it in this world."

"Well and good; but on the other hand—"

Sunk in debate, the two boys neither see nor hear the long, lean, perspiring woman who is running toward them, flourishing a broomstick, and crying: "Rascals! Heathens! What is this? Playing truant? Bathing in the middle of the day?"

"On the other hand, isn't the soul rather to be pitied? Sure, it has sinned; but doesn't Rashi himself quote a passage from the Talmud: 'No man commits a sin unless a lunatic spirit has entered into him.' You've got to be crazy to commit a sin. That is, if you do it deliberately, and not by mistake."

"Yes, but suppose the Evil Spirit is mighty?"

"That proves my point! The poor sinner's been forced into it."

"Is that so? Then what about the man

who becomes an apostate out of sheer perversity?"

"Well, I'll grant you something there. That kind of man is absolutely beyond me. It's as if you were to pick up an axe and split your own head open."

"Heathens! Villains! Time-wasters! I'll split both of your heads!" The woman's agonized voice is so close, so loud, that even the two philosophers are startled out of their debate. They spring to their feet. "It's mother! It's mother!" They snatch up their coats from the sand and run like hunted hares up the river bank.

THE sketch is autobiographical with regard to Peretz's early absorption in moral philosophy, but not with regard to his relations with his mother, who was a gentle, pious, loving, and understanding soul. He has chosen, here, to smile at his boyhood earnestness, but in his autobiography he recalls it as a painful phase of his growth. He recounts how, one Friday, he wandered about the fields of Zamoshch from morning to evening, communing with himself, and turned up for synagogue service in muddy shoes and in his weekday hat. His father, by nature a mild and thoughtful man, was beside himself at the desecration; and when the two of them got home he slapped the boy's face (something that happened only twice in Peretz's life) and ran into another room. The shocked mother permitted herself a protest; she murmured (not in her husband's hearing, of course): "As if a child hasn't its own childish sorrows!" And Peretz adds: "That my sorrows were by no means childish did not occur to my mother."

If consistency is the test of maturity, the sorrows of young Peretz was certainly not childish. His manner may have changed with the years, but not his interests; he found in boyhood one of his primary tasks. There came a time when—as we have seen—he could look back ironically on the portentous moods of his boyhood; but he never relinquished the pursuit of the moral absolute.

The consistency went deeper. Peretz acquired a wide if unsystematic knowledge of the modern European world of thought. The manner in which he acquired it was characteristic of his Jewish world. Secular education, as we understand it, was forbidden to pious Jews. I say, "as we understand it," because the religious or Talmudic education did contain an immense though fragmentary and disconnected range of secular information and misinformation; on law, dietetics, geography, astronomy, ritual, morals, psychology, history, mathematics, commerce—all in the framework of Talmudic text and commentary, and all of it shot through with poignantly beautiful legends and aphorisms and *obiter dicta* of all sorts. But modern secular education was anathema, and those that thirsted after it—as Peretz and thousands of his generation did, in the towns and villages of East European Jewry—could slake their thirst either by an open break with the Jewish community, and that meant ostracism, or by stealth. The devices to which the sinners were driven in the second case were often as comical as they were pathetic.

Zangwill tells us somewhere how one such sinner used to go to synagogue and read a Hebrew edition of the *Pickwick Papers* during the service. . . . Who would dream of examining the text of his prayer-book? It is to be assumed that the "worshipper" stood up and sat down in the right places, and punctuated the adventures of Mr. Pickwick and Samuel Weller with skillfully timed genuflections and silences. It all must have been a rather grim business.

Chaim Weizmann tells in his memoirs how a teacher of his, in the tiny village of Motol, came across a chemistry textbook in Hebrew, and was so enchanted with it that he risked life, limb, and livelihood—not to mention his immortal soul—by permitting some of his older pupils to read in it after regular hours. But to deflect suspicion, the text—which lost none of its fascination for teachers and pupils for being entirely unintelligible to them—was *chant-*

ed, so that a passerby, seeing the light in the window, and hearing the traditional melodic rise and fall of the Talmudic *recitativo*, would nod delightedly in the darkness, and thank the Lord for the continuing miracle of the Torah. It is not easy to imagine what went on in the minds of the teacher and pupils, what pictures or ideas formed there, as they sang, in a heart-breaking minor key, the Hebrew of "Two H plus O equals H₂O." But it is proper to add that from these astounding introductions there sometimes resulted—or at least they were followed by—fruitful and life-long scientific careers.

PERETZ'S contact with the "outside" world was not quite so grotesque. A lonely old musician of Zamoshch had taken a fancy to young Peretz, and before dying left the key of his library to the fifteen-year-old boy because he was, according to report, something of a genius. In that disordered roomful of books Peretz, safely withdrawn from observation, began to plough his way through the cultural records of the modern world, or such of them as the old musician (himself no doubt a frustrated soul) had collected. Some Polish Peretz already knew; also a little German. But no French. There were German and French and English books in Polish translation, and many in the original. Peretz's system was the simplest and most obvious. He decided to read *through the library*, beginning on the right as he came in, and working his way round until he had finished on the left hand side of the door. And he carried the program out! Does this sound insanely impossible to the reader? That is only because he does not know the wild longing for knowledge which tormented those Jewish youngsters of the ghettos of eighty, ninety, a hundred years ago: has no concept of the furious mental and spiritual energies which they had inherited; has no notion of the number of Minkowskys and Einsteins and Freuds and Bergsons who were latent in East European Jewry a hundred years ago—or who gasped out their

unrealized souls in the chambers of Maidanek and Oswiecim yesterday.

Of course he sometimes did a little skipping—at first the French books, for instance, since he did not know a word of the language. But later he came across an Ollendorff's "Grammar and Lexicon of the French Language" and learned it by heart from cover to cover. The knowledge so acquired he used for perusal of the French books on the last shelves, and then forgot French completely. Some of the German books he piled up on one side for later reference. But whatever he found in Polish, whether original or translated, he stuck to like a limpet. The order of the volumes was irrelevant; if volume five of the *Collected Works* of Victor Hugo followed volume three of the *Collected Works* of Eugene Sue, he felt no incongruity; *Toilers of the Deep* and *The Wandering Jew* were on the same level—they were modern culture. Everything else belonged in the same way—physics, chemistry, philosophy, sociology, poetry, drama, and romance.

He came across the *Code Napoleon* in the Polish translation of Zawacski. Wonderful! He read and understood—or thought he understood. Joy laid hold on his soul. Why, here were laws and regulations in the abstract, with no mention of "Reuben and Simon," the John Does of Talmudic instance: just generalizations and no personalities. Even Maimonides hadn't reached that stage. And right after the *Code Napoleon*—traveling always counter-clockwise along the library walls—Buckle's *History of English Civilization*. H-m—not bad at all; smacks of exegesis and commentary. Next to that, a text-book of physics. Good God, can he believe his eyes? Not the bed-cover warms *him*, *he* warms the bed-cover. What's more, there are ways of producing artificial snow. Devoid of any mathematical training, he skips the funny little arrangements of letters and figures which are the formulas. Napoleon, Buckle, and physics yield to the straggling remnants of Hugo, Dumas, and Sue; he ploughs through these and emerges once more into natural history: the human

body, the bodies of animals. Not very interesting! But when it comes to *ways* of living, adaptation of life to environment, habits, nest-building, food-gathering, care of the young, the wooing of females by males—he reads like one in a trance. God! How great is Thy world! How full of spirit and intelligence!

WE MAY well ask ourselves how it was that Peretz did not become completely addled. Many a young Jew in similar circumstances did. One thinks with awe of the Niagaras of intellectual energy that ran to waste in that one small human area, and of the souls that were carried to destruction by the torrents. Peretz crossed those rapids in safety. As the years passed, the wild confusion of facts shook down into systematic divisions. Peretz the auto-didact became in turn a capable teacher; his non-fictional writings show an intelligent grasp of popular science; he conducted classes in sociology and evolution. Moreover, he reflected in some of his pages the crystallized influences of Heine and Goethe. The material he had absorbed so unsystematically rearranged itself in his mind without conscious effort on his part.

I have said that Peretz's consistency went deeper than his abiding interest in the moral absolute. It extended to his material. All of his enduring work is Jewish, folkloristic, Hasidic. Lovers of Peretz have taken this for granted: where, they ask, was Peretz to get the material for his moral researches if not from the Jewish tradition? The answer is: he might very well have got it from his general reading. Besides, he had a sound knowledge of Russian law. From his twenty-sixth to his thirty-sixth year he was a successful lawyer in his native town of Zamoshch. If we grant that while the thinker in him drove him to the moral problem, the artist in him drove him to the fable, it still did not have to be the Jewish fable; and even the Jewish fable does not have to be steeped in Hasidic and East European Jewish folklore.

There's a catch in the last paragraph.

It was the *thinker* in Peretz that chose the material. With all his admiration for the moderns, all his longing to be European, all his socialistic leanings, he did not believe that science had probed as deep into the heart of man as had the Hasidic Rabbis. He could not accept the moral interpretation of economic determinism. He would not let the sinner plead: "I'm not to blame—it's the capitalistic system." He felt profoundly that in the secret places of the heart there are small but decisive freedoms, tiny possibilities. What we do with these possibilities depends on our awareness of them. And so, when he probed into the mysteries of man's behavior, he turned from Buckle and Mill and Marx to the Baal Shem and the Rabbi of Kotzk and the Rabbi of Nemirov and the Rabbi of Berdichev.

As a characteristic example of the moralistic folk tale of Peretz's I would like to offer "Thou Shalt Not Covet," and I think it best to re-tell it somewhat,* interweaving my own comment with the narrative.

Peretz begins this story by reminding the reader that it is incumbent on every Jew to fulfill all the commandments of the Torah; and if a Jew misses out on certain commandments in one incarnation, he must return in another incarnation to straighten out the account.

"Incarnation?" Is not this somewhat esoteric? What is it doing in a folk tale? The fact is that the Hebrew-Yiddish word *gilgul* (reincarnation) is no more esoteric among most Yiddish-speaking Jews than the word *potato pudding* is in English. *Gilgul* means both reincarnation in the abstract and some particular reincarnated soul. One would not expect a New York taxi-driver to say of someone he does not like: "That guy? He's the reincarnation of a dog." A

*This method will probably cause much anguish among such Peretz-devotees as will read it here. But between leaving Peretz unknown in English (as would be the case if I translated him by brute force) and remodeling him into intelligibility, I have chosen the latter.

Yiddish drayman would say it, and not sound out of place.

On the other hand, reincarnation is neither an article of faith among Jews, nor is it widely respected as a theory; nor does it appear anywhere even by implication in the prayers. It is merely spoken of; it is a familiar view, spread by certain mystics; it is part of the everyday vocabulary.

At any rate, here we are, talking about reincarnation, and Jewish souls which must make the earthly cycle over and over again until they are purified, have fulfilled all the commandments, and are ready to return to their home near the Throne of Glory. Some souls there are which, in their first descent into a human body, are lucky enough to find a perfect combination—whence a saint is produced. And he, fulfilling the entire Torah perhaps even before he has lived the normal span of years, ascends to heaven before the allotted time. Great saints, in other words, need only one incarnation—perhaps two. An ordinary, everyday soul may, God help us, suffer a hundred and one incarnations; and some there are which go from incarnation to incarnation endlessly, and will perhaps do so until the end of the human generations. And they will have to appear, with their blots and imperfections, to be judged in the Valley of Jehoshaphat or the Valley of Jezreel.

The point of the story which Peretz sets out to tell with this introduction is, once more, the small beginning of much evil. It is the story of a little sin, the merest trifle, by reason of which an otherwise perfect soul was forced into an additional reincarnation, whence a whole cycle of reincarnations was born. Anyway here, somewhat retold, is "Thou Shalt Not Covet."

* * *

IT CAME to pass on a certain day that the brief cycle of a certain saint was drawing to a close. The soul was ready to take its flight to the eternal home from which it had been exiled, for it was pure as purity itself. And in the heavenly regions a

reception committee waited to welcome it. The committee, alas, was doomed to disappointment.

In his last incarnation the saint in question had fulfilled himself in the character of an ascetic. However, not as an ascetic as this word is generally understood among non-Jews. The Hebrew for it is *mistapek bemuat*, "contented with little," with emphasis on the contentment. Another word for it is *gam-zu*, "this too," which, as every Yiddish-speaking Jew knows, is a brief reference to the phrase "this too is for the best." Whatever happens to one who is contented with little, he says, cheerfully: "this too is for the best." And "this" may be anything from an unbroken fast to a broken leg.

The saint we are telling of ate little and studied much. He lived a life apart, devoted to God's wisdom and to pious contemplation. The consequence of which, alas, was an extremely difficult death. For the body was furiously opposed to releasing the soul from the unequal partnership. The body argued: "What kind of life has he led me? What have I had out of it?" And every limb and organ had its own complaint, and fought it out with the Angel of Death. The heart said: "I've felt nothing." The hands: "We've possessed nothing." The eyes: "We've seen nothing." The legs: "We've been nowhere." And the Angel of Death had to contest every inch of the way, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. The death agony was, therefore, so protracted and so painful that in the very last moment, after he had already made confession, the saint uttered a moan. It was a moan of envy; he envied those whose death was easy. He coveted an easy death.

No sooner had he uttered this moan than soul and body were parted. There was not time enough for him to repent his transgression—for he had transgressed against the commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Covet." It is forbidden to the Jew to covet even an easy death.

The committee in heaven dispersed, the

gates of heaven were closed against the sinful soul; it had to return to earth to make good the defect.

THERE was naturally a great deal of pity in heaven for this particular soul. Certain members of the Court voiced considerable indignation with the behavior of the Angel of Death. He could at least have held off for another minute or two, and have given the saint a chance to bethink himself, and to repent, which would have been enough. Now it was too late; nothing could be done except to make it easier for the saint in his next incarnation. And it was decided to make his life so pleasant, so full, that he would have nothing whatsoever to envy in others—not even an easy death.

Satan, below, hearing this decision, smiled to himself. They had reckoned without their host.

So the saint was reincarnated, and became on earth Reb Zainvelle of Purisov. And if that affectionate diminutive, Zainvelle, followed by the dignified "of Purisov" (as it were *von Purisov*, or *de Purisov*, God forgive me), conveys nothing to the reader, here is a description of the man.

All the graces and virtues compounded, with good fortune thrown in. Nothing lacking. Reb Zainvelle is a greater scholar than the rabbi, a sweeter singer than the synagogue cantor, a more impressive reader of the Sacred Text than the best teacher in the locality who is a specially imported Litvak. Reb Zainvelle's wife is more precious than rubies, his children are perfection. Reb Zainvelle is, needless to say, a man of substance; his house is the finest in town; from that same house come the biggest charity gifts, and against that house is built, year after year, the loveliest tabernacle on the Festival of Tabernacles. And who, for that festival, has the noblest citron for the ritual blessing? Reb Zainvelle. Who has the most magnificent spice-holder in town for the Sabbath valedictory? Who is the best counsellor, who the most honest arbitrator? The same Reb Zainvelle. And

why should Reb Zainvelle want to be one of the trustees of the synagogue when every trustee does exactly what Reb Zainvelle wants?

There he sits, Reb Zainvelle, giving his days to sacred study and to good deeds. The eyes shine under the vast forehead like the eyes in the pictures of great sages of old. And when Reb Zainvelle opens his lips, a river of pearls issues from between them. As for his person and his bearing—royalty itself. A big, white curling beard, a huge fur head-gear with silver threads, satin gaberdine with silver hooks. What more can we say! Torah and worldly greatness in one, as the ancient saying goes.

Would you not be certain that the soul of Reb Zainvelle was making its last earthly sojourn? That never again would it need incarnation? And so it would have been if there had been no Satan.

His Satanic Majesty disguised himself one day as a Jewish traveler: a youngish fellow, modest-like, with a bit of hump on his back, a man obviously of no importance, coming from God knows where and going to the same place. He arrived in town one evening just between prayers, and sat himself down by the stove in the Study House. Reb Zainvelle, naturally, approaches him after prayers and invites him to supper. Reb Zainvelle is always on the look-out for traveling Jews. And the modest little fellow with the bit of a hump goes to Reb Zainvelle's house and the meal is served. And as you'd expect at Reb Zainvelle's table, the conversation between courses is learned and edifying. And one of Reb Zainvelle's sons-in-law propounds a difficult problem from the Talmud and gets stuck in the exposition, and all eyes turn to Reb Zainvelle to unravel the argumentation. Reb Zainvelle smiles, and when the meal is done honors the guest by asking him to lead in the grace. That being ended, Reb Zainvelle begins to handle the problem, and what he says is so lucid, so obvious, that it is as if a wide road were being laid down, a wide and shining road which everyone can tread. And

the menfolk at the table drink in the wisdom of Reb Zainvelle as if it were the wine of the sixth day of creation. But the little man with the bit of a hump, the wandering guest, smiles a thin, bitter smile. Which Reb Zainvelle sees and, having finished the discourse, he asks: "Don't you agree?" To which the other says, impudently, "By no means!" "Why?" asks Reb Zainvelle.

The hunchback begins to explain, and a dispute ensues.

And our little hunchback takes down a couple of volumes of the Talmud and turns the pages; and he quotes and comments and adds and explains, sentence crackling after sentence like explosions of sulphur, name after name sparkling on his lips, all with such swiftness and fury that the listeners are taken aback; and the hunchback seems to take on stature, seems to tower over the other men in the room; the words become more fiery; they surround Reb Zainvelle as with a blazing hedge, and Reb Zainvelle feels his breath coming short: no escape, backward or forward, by retraction or proof. The sons and the sons-in-law sit paralyzed; they want to help Reb Zainvelle but cannot open their lips. A burning hedge seems to be closing in on him, it becomes physical, it threatens to sear his flesh. He feels faint, his heart is in a vise, he cannot breathe. Somehow he manages to rise to his feet; he wants to go to the door, catch his breath, regain his wits. For all the time Reb Zainvelle is certain that *his* interpretation was the right one, and the deadly hunchback has only trapped him with ingenious misquotations and misapplications of the Torah; a trickster, a charlatan—one has only to get the key to his method, and in an instant he will dissolve, all that fury of hail will turn into a thin drizzle of water.

REB ZAINVELLE managed to flee from the house. It was a winter evening, and when he stepped out of doors the marketplace was carpeted with a new-fallen cover of soft, sparkling snow, and in the skies above innumerable stars twinkled. Reb Zainvelle drew free breath. His thoughts cleared, and all at once he perceived beyond all doubt

where it was that the wretched hunchback had trapped him, where the first false step had been permitted to pass. He saw the blazing hedge fall to pieces in the carpet of snow. He saw that the hedge had never been whole; there had been gaps in it, lacunae: and at every gap there stood one of the great teachers of old, and they beckoned in friendly wise to Reb Zainvelle, saying: "Zainvelle, it was a delusion; come here, Zainvelle, and we'll lead you through the fiery hedge; we'll lead you out and set your feet on a wide path."

And Reb Zainvelle smiled, and it seemed to him that he actually saw a wide path, and at the end of it a wide world beckoning to him. He began to remember: this or that sage had laid down this or that rule to guard this or that truth; here it was Rashi, there it was another. And Reb Zainvelle was filled with immense joy. It seemed to him that the whole universe of the Talmud lay open before him, and he was free to linger in it, to wander over its wide and radiant surface. Now he will show that impudent guest of his. . . . Why, everything is as clear as the snow beneath and the stars above. And Reb Zainvelle does not perceive that while his thoughts wander about in the upper world, his feet wander about in the lower; that he is being drawn across the market-place and out of the city, that he has left all the houses behind, that he is in the open fields, in the white and clear spaces of his vision.

Suddenly Reb Zainvelle stopped and trembled.

A black, ponderous cloud had covered the heavens; the stars were extinguished; an immense shadow lay on the snow. And Reb Zainvelle was wandering not only with his feet but with his mind too. He was back in the labyrinth of the Talmudic problem.

Then his eyes fell upon a little wisp of smoke in the distance, and since it was a sign of life, he made in that direction. His body was tired, his spirits were low. He plodded on until he came to a dilapidated little country inn. He entered, and found himself in a smoky room. He stood at the door, unnoticed by anyone. And as he stood there he saw the old peasant woman at the counter, half asleep over her supply of drink and food. Outside the wind howled, a bitter, wet, and penetrating wind. But within, the stove blazed, filled with faggots. Frozen half to death, Reb Zainvelle thought of drawing near the stove, but he noticed that all the places were taken. The drunken peasants made a closed circle, and each of them held in one hand a canister of whisky, in the other a piece of salt herring or pickled cucumber. They drank and ate, their faces shone, their eyes were full of affection and happiness; and now again one peasant embraced another, and they drank together.

And in that moment Reb Zainvelle, who was a greater scholar than the Rabbi of Purisov, a sweeter singer than the synagogue cantor, and a more impressive reader of Sacred Text than the town's best teacher; Reb Zainvelle, whose wife was more precious than rubies, whose children were perfection, whose advice was the sagest; in that instant Reb Zainvelle could not restrain an impulse of the heart. In that instant Reb Zainvelle, standing in that miserable inn, with his coat freezing on him, with the wind blowing on him, envied the peasants who sat round the blazing stove, each drinking from his can of whiskey, biting on the piece of herring or pickled cucumber, and exchanging obscene pleasantries with his neighbor.

And there began for the soul of the saint a new series of reincarnations.

THE ECONOMIC CRISIS BEHIND SOVIET EXPANSION

Does Russia's "Business Cycle" Compel Foreign Aggression?

GUENTER REIMANN

ONE of the more urgent mysteries, in a world where mysteries are becoming all too common, is the motive power behind the great expansionist drive of the Soviet Russian state: eastward into Asia and westward into Europe. Neither of the two most popular explanations—an unbridled lust for power or an intransigent social idealism on the part of the Soviet leadership—can do justice to the complicated pattern of events, for they start from erroneous premises. The fact is that the Kremlin houses neither mere adventurers, nor men propelled by passionate devotion to the idea of "world revolution" or "world Communism."

On the contrary: they are prisoners of basic maladjustments in their own economic system, which drives them inexorably to seek an escape in external conquest.

It is difficult for us to comprehend this—though it is no less difficult for the Russians, if that is any consolation. Russian econo-

mists show no ability to understand their own economic system, or even to observe and accurately describe its workings. Indeed, for a good many years, and even today, one of the most dangerous and fruitless professions in Russia has been that of an economist.

Back in 1930, leading members of the Communist Academy in Moscow engaged in a bitter theoretical controversy which, if carried through, might have led to some interesting discoveries. The central issue of the argument, couched in the abstract terms dear to Soviet rhetoricians, was the "character" of the Russian state economy. Karl Marx had begun his analysis of capitalism with an inquiry into the nature of the commodity. Consequently, the Russian Marxists turned their attention to the product turned out by Soviet industry. Was it a commodity?—it was, after all, sold on a market at state-controlled prices. If so, then—according to the orthodox definition—capitalism still prevailed in Russia. Or was it rather a socialist product and not a commodity at all? In which case, how account for the role of money and markets and prices?

A full exploration of these questions would have led to statistical and factual investigations of the structure of production in Soviet Russia, price movements, fluctuations in supply, and, perhaps, the impact on the economic system of the party line. However, the discussion was suddenly terminated by order of the Politbureau and the texts involved were never published.

In 1943, the Soviet economists gained a new lease on life as the result of the promulgation of a new doctrine, rid of any dangerous implications. In an article* in *Pod*

WHAT is the moving force behind Soviet expansion? Is it a policy based on the whims of Soviet leaders, is it part of a dream of world revolution and socialization, or is it the effort to resolve by external means certain basic maladjustments in the Soviet political and economic system? The discovery of the correct answer to this question is perhaps the key problem facing international politics today. In this article, GUENTER REIMANN puts forward his own explanation of the dynamic behind Soviet aggression. Dr. Reimann is a well-known student of totalitarian economics and politics. He is the author of several books, among them: *The Vampire Economy* (1930), *Myth of the Total State* (1941), and *Patents for Hitler* (1942). He was born in Germany in 1904 and studied economics at the University of Berlin and the London School of Economics. At present he is preparing a book on the economic system of the Soviet Union.

* An English translation of this article appeared in the *American Economic Review* for September 1944.

Snaniem Marxisma on "Teaching Economics in the Soviet Union," a group of Russian economists declared that the laws of economic value (labor theory of value, and so on) which Marxism held to be valid under capitalism also applied to Russian "socialism," and that prices and markets have their proper place in the Soviet system. But—and here was the "socialist" novelty—the operation of these laws is controlled by the state instead of the reverse; where formerly society was at the mercy of blind economic surges, now economic laws are, as it were, legislated by the state. In accordance with this doctrine, the various stages of Russian economic development are viewed as a continuous and self-controlled progression from defense against foreign intervention (War Communism), to reconstruction (New Economic Policy), to the building up of socialism (first two five-year plans), to the final realization of socialism. It is officially estimated to have taken place in 1936 (though there has been some confusing double-talk on this matter).

SURPRISINGLY enough, this account of the Russian economic system is held in high regard by many self-designated "realistic" political thinkers outside the Soviet Union. These accept the Soviet thesis that socialism has been the consistent goal of the Stalin regime and that it has been just about attained. They explain the Russian drive for empire as a technological necessity on the part of a planned industrial society—a sort of organic socialist imperialism. The great remaining problem for the Soviet system, they say, is to secure *Grossraum*—a geographic and demographic base broad enough to facilitate full use of mass-production techniques.

This analysis holds little water, either in theory or in fact. The incorporation in the Soviet economy of some thousands of skilled German technicians, and millions of dollars worth of German machinery, certainly should have provided an ample and secure enough technological foundation for such a planned economy. But the expansionist drive continues, beyond the Oder, beyond

Manchuria. And indeed, if the notion that the Russian state is based on a harmonious system of rational planning were true, there would seem to be no need for external expansion at all; given Russia's raw materials and her present population, such a system would be able to create a substantial and stable internal market, and would have no difficulty in training suitable technicians.

The root error of this argument is its premise: that Soviet Russia is a smoothly functioning "planned society." In reality, the exact opposite is the case. The Russian economic system is one of anarchy, of gigantic economic disproportions, of production bottlenecks. And out of these internal stresses and strains there arises the compelling need for foreign expansion.

It is for this reason that discussions of shifts in the Communist "line" are barren unless related to changes in the internal economic situation. To indulge in this indoor sport even with Russian officials leads to no clearer understanding of what is actually taking place, for the holders of authoritarian state power can never admit that they have either been mistaken or surprised.

Russian economic policy, as will be seen, follows no straight line of progress. It is cyclical; and with each cyclical change in policy, the official conceptions of the meaning of the Soviet state and of its aims are revised *ad hoc*. Each new stage is asserted to be the confirmation of a particular theory—the essence of the system requires the canonization of practices peculiar to the particular phase.

The very words by which changes in policy are announced and justified serve to obscure their meaning, so that language, in the last two decades, has become one of the most effective of iron curtains. American educators may recommend the study of the Russian language. But how shall the student of grammar penetrate the mysteries of the new *Lingua Estatica*? How shall he translate into terms expressing their real content "party line," "right-wing deviation," "left-wing deviation"?

Present political usage in Russia of the

terms "Left" and "Right" is quite unrelated to the traditional meaning of these terms, or even to their present meaning in other countries. In Soviet Russia, as in Nazi Germany, it must be understood that a "Left" turn means greater sacrifices on the part of the people in behalf of the state authorities, more power to the secret police and inner party circle of bureaucrats. A shift to the "Right," on the other hand, reflects a temporary curtailment of the claims of the state, a relaxation of central authority and of the pressure on the worker and the peasant-farmer.

THE shifts from "Left" to "Right" and from "Right" to "Left" constitute the cyclical pattern of Soviet history ever since its inception. Thus, the revolution began with a "Left" turn toward War Communism, and followed with a "Right" turn in 1921, a "Left" turn in 1928 and a "Right" turn in 1933, a "Left" turn in 1938 and—after the wartime vacuum—a "Right" turn in 1945. Since the end of the war, there has been a "Left" turn in 1946, followed by a "Right" turn in December 1947.

To understand the problems, needs, and motives of the government in the various phases of these cycles is to get at the root of the expansionist drive of the Russian state: it is to discover also that far from abolishing the cycle of boom and bust that leads to economic crisis, as Soviet theoreticians have always boasted, the Russian economic system has cyclical swings like those of capitalist countries, though different in cause.

The underlying reason for the periodic crises of the Soviet system is the disproportionate rise of non-productive expenditures. The totalitarian state is a huge parasitic body. Besides the ordinary administration, there are swollen armies of supervisors to supervise the bureaucracy, and a large military machine with its own personnel. These are the new high-income groups whose economic demands are steadily rising—to leave them unsatisfied would be to undermine the classes that form the social foundations

of the entire system. The "take" of this top strata of the state is quite apart from what are normally considered the "fixed costs" of an economy (administration, accounting, etc.); the tribute paid by all producers to the holders of political power far exceeds the practices of a private, capitalist social order, and only an authoritarian ruling group—backed to the hilt by a secret police—is able to extract it.

A few figures may be quoted to throw some light on the inflated size of these unproductive overhead costs. In 1937 the number of "bookkeepers, accountants, etc." was 1,617,000 in addition to 822,000 "economists, statisticians." In the United States in 1940 only 447,000 persons were employed as "bookkeepers, accountants, cashiers, ticket agents, etc." Thus the American economy required one "bookkeeper" for each 54 workers, the Russian one for each 20 workers. In all branches of the economy, inflated bureaucratic staffs have come into existence. In 1940 about 20 percent of all kolkhoz (collective farm) members were engaged in administrative or office work. The wage differentials that these officials enjoy are far higher than in capitalistic countries. The salaries of chief engineers, directors, and top administrative personnel are often one hundred times greater than the average worker's wage. In the Soviet Army the ratio of a private's pay to a colonel's is 1:240, against 1:5 in the American Army.

Yet, at the same time that these new "fixed costs" are far greater than in any capitalist country, the level of productivity in Russia is much lower: a vicious circle begins to squeeze the regime like a vise. The state must seek to bolster the economic system by ever more stringent controls or "planning," but, in turn, centralized controls, national monopolies, and the upkeep of a secret police, result in tremendous economic costs. The more the state seeks to increase its share in the national wealth, the more it contributes to waste and unproductive expenditures: that is the "business cycle" of Soviet economy—different from those of private capitalism, but no less disastrous.

JOHN D. LITTLEPAGE, who was a technical expert in Russia during the 30's, has given us a graphic picture of what "planning" means in the Russian system: "The number of these numerous planning departments increased by leaps and bounds, so that before long thousands of men and women were engaged throughout the year in the process of planning. They tried to keep busy, and spent a considerable part of their time thinking up questionnaires and forms of all kinds, which they sent out to our engineers and managers to be filled out. The business of filling out forms of this sort has become one of the chief functions of every Soviet executive's offices" (*In Search of Soviet Gold*, 1939).

It should not be surprising, then, that—aside from the incubus of secret police, "administrators," most government employes, and the like—the very process of planning itself imposes an almost intolerable strain upon the economy. State plans are changed almost from day to day, and soon there emerges an anarchic whirl of priorities: different urgencies are born with each new dawn, and orders and counterorders, priority ratings and competitive priority ratings, blanket the industrial machine. The following description of "planning" was officially presented at the 18th Congress of the Communist Party, in 1941:

"The industrial management often receives the plan (production schedules) for the next period (month) only two or three days before the first of the month.

"When the plant is ready to start production in accordance with the plan, the plan will be unexpectedly changed, and the entire work must be reorganized.

"Sometime the plan will be changed several times in one month.

"During the planning period, the . . . commissars will send telegrams to the plant managements with special orders to manufacture certain products without any provisions or materials, and without any indication of which other scheduled orders are to be cancelled so as to fulfill the new orders."

Though it appears from the outside that the state sits placidly in the center of its web and directs the life of the nation, in reality the various planning agencies are struggling desperately against bottlenecks, "deviations," and "sabotage," with successes or failures that mean life and death—not only for individuals—but for entire provinces. The administrative wheels of the bureaucratic colossus turn ever more feverishly, begetting a further chaos.

THE typical Soviet "business cycle" works something like this:

In the "Left" phase, the state (i.e., the party and its favorites) tries to strengthen its productive capacity and military strength and to increase its revenues. (Remember that Russia was a backward country in 1917 and that to increase her productivity means to industrialize her—which means in turn to invest goods and energies in creating the equipment of production instead of producing things to satisfy consumers' needs.) Great reliance is placed on central controls and the secret police. Capital goods production increases while consumer goods production dwindles to a trickle. The ration card replaces the ruble, but only a meager supply of the barest necessities with which to maintain life is available. "Sabotage" increases as a result of muddled plans. Productivity declines because of the lack of incentives to the workers. A spreading black market appears, and with it barter and a dual price system. Consumption by the state apparatus rises, and consumption by private individuals drops.

After an orgy of deficit spending, the government is faced with a sharp rise in expenditures, a drop in production, and the collapse of the entire system of distribution. Money no longer buys goods. The state responds with coercive measures against producers and employs mass terror against all sections of the population. These, however, only worsen matters. The authoritarian planners finally find the entire system in a deadly crisis, from which the only escape is through the door of capitalism.

A "Right" turn is on the order of the day. The worker is offered the incentives of a market economy. The state curtails its expenditures and invests less funds in the production of capital goods, while more consumers' goods are made available to the people. The black market is raised above ground and is sanctified as the "open" or "free" market, and finally rationing is abolished. Market values replace controlled prices—money is stabilized—police measures are relaxed—living standards rise.

But the totalitarian state cannot permit this "Right" turn to develop into a complete turnabout. With the increasing freedom of economic activity, private wealth begins to attract social prestige and political power, and presents itself as a possible source of opposition to the governing machine. Furthermore, the growing demands of private owners of money funds clashes with the financial requirements of industrialization and of the top-heavy state bureaucracy. A new crisis takes place, marked by "self-criticism" and purges, followed by a "Left" turn.

ON THREE different occasions in the course of Soviet history, the rate of government expenditures increased to the point where the smallest possible return was left to the producers. These were the periods 1919-21, 1928-33, and 1938-44. In the first period (War Communism), the printing press was the major source of government income, and inflation bore down heavily upon producer and consumer; in 1924, a new currency had to be introduced to replace the inflated ruble, and a freer market was permitted. But the first Five Year Plan (1928-33), which was a "Left" turn, saw a steep increase in the turn-over tax (one of the important means by which the government arrogated the fruits of production to itself in order to invest them in capital goods and the maintenance of the bureaucracy) and a second bout of printing-press inflation; in 1935, deflationary steps were taken, paper money was withdrawn, and the Soviet citizen could once again draw breath. But by 1937, government expendi-

tures once again began to surge ahead, and the turn-over tax levied by the regime amounted to sixty percent of the total value of retail trade sales.

Each monetary reform was preceded by a sharp crisis in production and by mass famine in town and country: all consumer goods were rationed, and the rations were not always to be had. At the same time, a black market undermined the official distribution system and absorbed an increasing proportion of consumer goods. Whenever a "Right" turn reintroduced money incentives, the production of consumer goods rose, with the government abolishing the rationing system and allowing the "free" market to determine distribution.

On the eve of the Nazi invasion of Russia, a new "Right" turn was overdue; but the danger of war forced the government to increase its share in production—especially that sector devoted to arms—even further. Faced with this dilemma, the Soviet government during the war maintained a kind of dual system. In many areas, money ceased to have any role: forced labor and direct requisitioning were applied. In other areas, not under immediate threat of invasion, the money return for the producer was increased, and the government even permitted a temporary decline in the rate of taxation. Consequently, large amounts of money were hoarded, and a return to a "free" market made more difficult.

Finally, in December 1947, the monetary reform that had been due in 1941 was promulgated. This was the signal for a "Right" turn—but it is a signal that has been obeyed only in part. For the government cannot, especially at present, take the full consequence of a "Right" turn. It cannot markedly reduce the overhead costs of the bureaucratic system, thin the ranks of government employees and soldiers, or scale down the pace of industrialization and preparation for war in order to allow a revival of consumer goods industries. So the Soviet government wavers, first taking a "Left" and then quickly a "Right" direction, until its policy is now a troubled and accelerated zig-zag.

War, war devastation, and war preparations have critically aggravated the difficulties of the system. A real turn to the "Right" requires the restoration of economic incentives and of a money-market. But this need comes up against the simultaneous need of the state to increase its industrial plant even faster, to finance an even more inflated state bureaucracy and a more costly militarism, including atomic research and installations.

Thus the completion of the "Right" turn becomes impossible. The cyclical pressure remains, but a full turn of the cycle is denied it. The cyclical crisis tends to become a permanent crisis. And, thus trapped, the system must look about frantically for an escape from its dilemma.

THE regime has two "remedies" on hand for this critical situation. They are (1) increased use of forced labor, (2) foreign expansion—or both.

The acute crises of Soviet economy are accompanied, not by mass unemployment as under capitalism, but by a drastic scarcity of labor, skilled and unskilled. During the "Left" periods of intensive industrialization and highly centralized planning, when economic waste increases and the productivity of labor declines for lack of incentives, the demand for labor far exceeds the supply. More and more workers are consumed by the system. The word "consumed" is used advisedly, since the workers work longer hours, at greater speed, and with less return.

During the revolutionary era of War Communism, it was possible to organize corps of workers who volunteered their free time. During the First Five Year Plan, slave-labor armies were recruited from among the middle-class farmers (kulaks) and others who were purged. Finally, in the postwar period, the economy was enriched by forced labor composed of foreign deported populations, prisoners of war, and native Russians—estimates of the total vary considerably, but they all agree in placing it in the millions.

Forced labor is, however, only a tempor-

ary expedient that spends itself. (It has a low productivity and a short life span.) Some other way to alleviate the onerous burden of the "fixed costs" of the Soviet economy must be found.

The other recourse of the Soviet system is to attach foreign countries to the Soviet system as "shock absorbers," whose function it is to contribute to the maintenance of the inflated state machine and the party hierarchy, and whose virtue it is to be expendable in the wasteful tragedy of Russian "planning," or industrialization. To flee the permanent economic crisis that looms before it, the Soviet economy must seek to transfer its deficits to the shoulders of satellite countries. That is the dynamic behind Soviet expansion.

It is not a "socialistic" dynamic, or even a "collectivist" one. It is, in the old-fashioned sense of the term, a "class" dynamic—an expedition for plunder on the part of a ruling class whose very existence throttles the workings of its own economic system. The main purpose of the Soviet occupation of the countries of Eastern Europe was not to hasten the advent of world socialism; all policies of reconstruction and reorganization in Poland, Rumania, Hungary, etc., have been subordinated to the needs of the Russian government—needs filled by the dismantling and transfer of factories, highly advantageous and one-sided trade treaties, and the like. The aim has been immediate benefit and advantage, not long-range socialist virtues.

But these immediate gains are soon dissipated in that giant whirlpool of bureaucratized chaos which is the Soviet economic system. They are in the nature of temporary blood-transfusions that quicken the patient's heart without healing the wound, and after a spurt of vigor he is once more bled dangerously white. New transfusions become ever more necessary, and they are sought for, grimly, at the point of a bayonet.

Using the Marxist phraseology, it is the "contradictions" of the Soviet statist economy that lead irresistibly to imperialist expansion—and possibly war.

MEMO FROM THE THIRTY-SIX

A Story

J. AYALTI

This story is based on an old legend that there are always thirty-six just men (The Thirty-Six) by virtue of whom the world exists and without whom the world could not continue.

WHEN all the Jews of the town of Sapetkin were exterminated, one of them was left alive. Todros, the water carrier—he was left alive.

The Lithuanians with their whips and the Ukranians from the other side of the frontier didn't bother him; the Polish peasants wearing Jewish boots kept away from him; even the Gestapo chief turned his head and pretended not to notice Todros when he passed by.

Apparently this was because Todros was one of the hidden saints, one of the Thirty-Six.

If they had exterminated Todros, there would have been no more world, God forbid: no more Lithuanians with whips, no more Ukranians and Poles wearing Jewish boots—even no more Gestapo.

But Todros wasn't satisfied. So he set out through desolated cities and towns and had the following announcement published in the proper places: "As of this date, Todros the water-carrier convokes a Great Assembly of the Thirty-Six. And at once, without delay."

For, according to their constitution, every

one of the Thirty-Six can convoke a general assembly. That is to say, he can convoke it when times are really bad.

And times were really bad. And how bad! They asked, "Where is it to be held?"

He answered, "In a small forest near Treblinka."

SO THE Thirty-Six assembled in a small forest near Treblinka. There were all sorts: scholars with long, gray beards, small-town artisans with broad backs, as well as a few Galician doctors. There was even a rabbi from New York State. All he could understand was English. Nobody knew how he got there. At any rate, he didn't come by airplane.

Somebody with a long beard began to justify God's ways, saying that: "God can never err nor doth the Eternal pervert justice," and that: "Man cannot be more righteous than his Lord." As proof he cited opinions all the way from Moses, our master, to the Gaon of Vilna and the author of the book, *Ye Who Desire Life* (of blessed memory).

But Todros wouldn't stand for that: he was a simple Jew, he said, and he just couldn't get so much Torah into his head. "And it seems to me," he added, "that this time 'they' have really gone too far."

"Then what is there to do?" they asked.

He said, "One of us has to go up there, himself, 'not through an Angel and not through a messenger,' and see about 'Watchman, what of the night?', that is to say, —'Where is the watchman of the night?'"

So they said to him: "Let the letter-reader be the messenger"—meaning, that is, that he—Todros, that is—ought to be the one to go.

But since he was no scholar and knew

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nothing of the Holy Tongue, they decided to give him a memorandum to take along. So a committee of scholars sat down and wrote a memorandum with goose-quills on parchment to the Master of the Universe: "Such and such being the case, 'The waters having come in even unto the soul'—'how long, oh Lord, how long?'"

At the end they even put in a couple of ulterior motives: "If there are no more Jews, who will praise God? 'Not the dead shall praise the Lord' . . . etc., etc. . . ."

So Todros stuck the memo under his coat tail (so that if the Poles were to catch him they wouldn't convert it into uppers for a pair of boots) and set out on his way.

HE WENT along with a large company. There were thousands of souls in the heavy smoke pouring out of the Treblinka chimneys: men, women, young folk, old folk, children—everybody. There were even a few apostates; and one proselyte who looked like a former Subotnik [a Russian religious sect that observed the Sabbath] with a singed beard, hung around the edges of the host. So Todros attached himself to the crowd and flew along.

At first they all related what had happened to them: how they had been thrown into trains, which were later sealed, how they had been given towels and led into a room . . . but no one listened, because the same thing happened to everybody. They all knew all about it. It became a little jollier the second day. They began a political discussion: Zionists argued with Bundists, Bundists with Communists, and some Left Poale Zionists quoted Ber Borochov. Pious Jews discussed and studied a page of Gemara which they knew by heart.

Todros knew nothing about politics and since he wasn't a scholar either, he listened to the women. They began to tell all about the pickled cucumbers and casks of beet soup which they had left at home. The richer housewives listed their jars of preserves and bottles of vishniak. Old grannies chanted their Yiddish-taitch prayer book.

When they arrived at the Gates of Heav-

en a brigade of angels began to sort out the souls: some were to go to Paradise and some to Gehenna. The atheists at once protested, "What's the idea?" They raised a row. "We were good enough Jews for the crematorium, why shouldn't we be good enough for Paradise?" "All Israel have a share in the world to come," a Socialist suddenly recalled a long-forgotten text.

A Jew who had lived through a couple of dozen sortings in various camps sighed in a low voice, "I didn't know that there were sortings in Heaven, too."

Todros didn't have the time to hear out the entire debate. He was concerned with those who were still alive and hurried to the Seat of Glory. As he approached, a secretary got in his way: "Where to?"

So Todros explained the way it was; how the Thirty-Six had assembled and composed a memorandum and how he had to deliver it to the Master of the Universe, in person.

"Hand it over!" The angel stretched out his hand from under his wing. "It will be all right. I'll pass it on."

"No!" Todros stood his ground, "This time it is not to be through an angel and not through a messenger. . . ."

The secretary crinkled his forehead. (He didn't want to start up with the Thirty-Six.)

"The Master of the Universe is not at home," he said coldly. "I suppose you think that yours is the only world he has on his mind? There are (God keep us from the evil eye!) thousands of stars and suns, big worlds and little worlds, like sand on the shore of the sea."

"Why, what do you think, that all He has to do is sit all day on the Seat of Glory and wait for your prayers?" interrupted a blonde, plump angel girl, who was sitting at a typewriter and typing lists based on last Rosh Hashanah's balance sheet.

She really didn't have a hard job at all, that blonde angel. All she did was stick long columns of names into the typewriter and, without looking, type along every column the same two words:

By Fire

By Fire

By Fire

By Fire

But her heart was sad. A mere matter of five thousand years before, her sweetheart, a handsome young angel, had gone down to the sinful earth and there had fallen in love with one of Adam's daughters. Can you imagine it, he even got friendly with her and she bore him a child. At any rate, he stayed down there.

Todros, the water-carrier, didn't want to mix into the love affairs that go on between the inhabitants of heaven and earth: "When will He be back?" he asked.

"Tomorrow."

"Oh, well, there is nothing to be done about it," Todros thought to himself. True, he knew that by tomorrow there'd be a good few trains arriving with Jews aboard in Buchenwald, Auschwitz, and Treblinka, but there was nothing he could do to help them.

So he waited. Gradually evening stole in. The stars shone down on the heavenly streets and avenues. The nightingales started singing in Paradise and couples kissed in the dark alleys. The gleaming sword automatically turned at the gate of heaven, reflecting the gleaming moon now on one edge and now on the other.

Todros lay down behind the paling, and fell asleep at once.

TIRED out after his long journey, Todros slept late. When he opened his eyes, the sun was already high in the sky, and it was nine o'clock. "Oh, oh, I've overslept!" Todros said, taking it to heart. He knew that every morning at nine o'clock with true Prussian punctuality the gas chambers in Auschwitz and Maidanek opened. Around him the angel mothers put their radios on high, so that the screams from down below might not disturb the heavenly peace and frighten the angel babies in their cradles.

"Perhaps we will still be able to avert the decree before noon," Todros thought to himself, and set out, stepping quickly along. On the way he encountered an elderly angel

carrying two tremendous sacks on his back.

"Is the Master of the Universe at home yet?" Todros asked.

"No, not yet."

"What are you carrying in those sacks?"

"Good deeds," the angel sighed. "I am carrying them from the gates of prayer into the storage-hanger. But it's a useless labor: they won't appear at the Judgment Day anyhow, for their owners are already in the camp, awaiting their turn."

Todros waited till noon. The angels began to stream into the restaurants. For lunch they ordered stuffed fish taken from the Leviathan. Afterwards they ate steak cut off the Wild Boar and drank down foaming glasses of the Preserved Wine. While they were having coffee an announcer broadcast over the radio that between the afternoon and evening prayers the saint of our generation, the brilliant, etc., Rabbi Samuel Aaron ha-Kohen, who had just come from the Auschwitz ovens, would deliver an interesting, authentic account of his adventures in the other world, at the same time preaching on the text: "The world reposes on three things: on Torah, and on Service, and on Charity." In addition, a chanteuse from the Jewish theater on Earth who had been in the Warsaw Ghetto would render the verse: "Give thanks unto the Lord for He is good, For His mercy endureth forever."

Todros was very fond of singing, but he had no time to go. Instead, he hurried to the Seat of Glory. The same secretary who had got in his way the day before came out to see him, looking surprised.

"Is the Master of the Universe back yet?" Todros asked.

A peal of laughter rang through the office. Even the serious-looking Chief Secretary smiled.

"What are you laughing at?" said Todros, puzzled, "You said, 'tomorrow' yesterday yourselves, didn't you?"

"Apparently you don't read the psalms," said one of the students, nodding confidentially to the blonde secretary. "For if you did read the Psalms, you would know that

'A thousand years in Thine eyes are as yesterday.'"

Todros started up, "Yes, yes, I have often read the verse, but I'm a simple Jew and don't know the meaning of every Hebrew word I read."

"When we say 'tomorrow' around here we mean in a thousand years around," the secretary explained to Todros. "Do you want to leave your memo with us?"

"No!" Todros stuck the parchment behind his coat-tail. "It'll get lost among all your papers, and you won't be able to find it in a thousand years around."

And he set out on his way back to the sinful earth, to render an account of his mission to the Great Assembly.

TODROS was alone on his return trip. For who is so crazy as to go down to the sinful earth from heaven nowadays? True, the angels were still talking about their fallen comrades of yesteryear, and the kindness of Adam's daughters. But what's the point of visiting Earth when the cities are in ruins and you can't even get a hotel room to sleep over for a night?

The journeying back and forth took a long time and when Todros arrived at last at the small forest near Treblinka he found nobody there. In the distance he saw people walking around with large sieves and shaking their hands, like peasants sifting the chaff out of the grain. Curious, he drew nearer and saw that they actually were Polish peasants. So he asked them:

"What are you doing, my good people?"

"We are sifting through the ashes," they explained. "Sometimes a gold tooth turns up, and sometimes even a marriage ring."

So Todros understood that the Jews had been burned to death. Oh well, no use crying, they were burned to death, and nothing could be done about it—"blessed be the true judge." But where were the other thirty-five saints?

Todros looked around and saw that the world continued to exist: the peasants were looking for gold teeth in the ashes; the corn was growing splendidly, for the earth was

fat with the dead; and they were dealing in inflated currency in the town of Treblinka: with gold imperials and green dollars.

So he understood that the Thirty-Six must be somewhere about. For the world would have perished without the Thirty-Six: the peasants would have found no wedding rings in the ashes, the corn would not have grown, and there would not even have been any business dealings in inflated currency.

So he went on. He sought the Thirty-Six in the DP camps of all four zones, English, American, Soviet, and French. But they were nowhere to be found.

He saw *fräuleins* kissing American soldiers and *hausfraus* hauling up the fancy credenzas from their cellars and setting them up in their rooms; and he understood that his comrades must be somewhere about. For by virtue of whom were the *fräuleins* kissing American soldiers in return for free nylons, if not by virtue of the Thirty-Six?

So he went on. He went on and on till he came to a great expanse of water. And there a lot of Jews sat waiting. Someone told him that just the day before an illegal ship had sailed off, carrying Jews to Palestine. There were thirty-five of them, all told: small-town householders, scholars with gray beards, a couple of Galician doctors, and one rabbi who spoke only English.

So Todros understood that those were his comrades, who had just sailed for Palestine. So he signed up for the illegal emigration too, and sat down and waited.

He waited for one day, and two, and three, till on the twelfth day he saw everybody running towards the waterfront. So he got up and ran too. There on the water was a ship that had just arrived. It was the very same ship on which the Thirty-Six had set out.

Apparently, the ship had been turned about in mid-voyage, because the lower deck was fenced off with barbed wire and there stood British soldiers, armed with rifles, revolvers, and other such weapons.

Todros wanted to go aboard the ship, to give a report on his mission as soon as pos-

sible. But no one was permitted to come on board. What was he to do? He finally disguised himself as a correspondent for the *New York Times*. Then they let him on board.

The comrades were overjoyed when they saw him, for they were sure that he had managed to avert the death decree. But, looking more closely into his face, they understood that something had gone wrong.

"What happened?"

"The Master of the Universe is not at home! When I asked for him, they said that he would be back tomorrow—but in heaven tomorrow means a thousand years

around!" Todros rushed through his report, anxious to get rid of his mission as soon as possible.

"Certainly!" exclaimed one of the gray-bearded scholars. "Why the verse states explicitly, 'For a thousand years in Thine eyes are as yesterday.'"

"Yes, yes!" Todros agreed at once. "That's exactly the verse they cited."

And the next morning the ship carrying the Thirty-Six, the barbed-wire fence, and the armed soldiers sailed off in an unknown direction. Todros didn't go back on shore again, and no one knows to this day where the ship sailed to.

NIGHT, STARS, GLOW-WORMS

H. LEIVICK

I TOLD my little boy a story,
And he fell asleep.
Everyone knows the stories one tells
For little boys to fall asleep.

Once
there was a little lamb,
and the little lamb went astray,
in the dense forest.
(Poor, poor little lamb.)

Then there came a wolf,
A ravenous wolf—
The little lamb must go astray,
The ravenous wolf must raven.
(Poor, poor wolf.)

Night, stars, glow-worms.

What is there left for me
To do—the father,

Among stars and glow-worms and little boy?
(Poor, poor wolf.)

Son—
It is good that you are asleep and cannot see
My face, among stars and glow-worms.
(Poor, poor little lamb.)

How far you have gone astray,
How far into the forest.
(Poor, poor little boy.)

Wolf,
go away,
from the bed of my son.
Wolf,
look not
at the throat of my son.
(Poor,
poor
wolf.)

H. LEIVICK, who was born in Russia in 1888, is one of the outstanding figures in modern Yiddish literature. He is perhaps best known for his play *The Golem*. Mr. Leivick came to New York, where he now lives, in 1913. His poem, "Who Will Solace?" was published in the July 1948 COMMENTARY. The present poem has been translated from the Yiddish by Jacob Sloan.

THE JUDAISM OF A MAN OF LETTERS

The Use of Tradition and Community

PAUL GOODMAN

I HAVE no lively awareness of the Jewish community and its problems (their impact on me is unconscious). I should hazard the guess that the disease of all real community in America is the most important cause of the specifically Jewish community illness.

If, however, the question is raised concerning the relation of Jewish culture to my creative behavior as a man of letters, as a poet and a weaver of political thoughts, then I find that I am teeming with news. It is precisely the "positive Jewish content," about which so many Jewish cultural critics seem so despondent, that looms in my work. . . .

I find myself in agreement with Elliot Cohen's statement that the Jews, more than most people, seem to keep persistently asking the "questions of human destiny, of human individuality, of human freedom, of the rights of the outsider and the oppressed, displaced persons"; but I should go further than he does, not to say that Jews have the right answers to such questions—for then we should be in Paradise—but that, by and large, we have the best answers available.

It is no longer news that we are in the midst of something like a revival, if not of religion, then of interest in religion among intellectuals here and abroad, especially of the younger generation. Sometime this is reflected in expressions of personal faith or religious conversion; more often it takes the form of unsystematized metaphysical and religious speculation. In the next few issues COMMENTARY will print a number of brief, informal, and personal reflections on Judaism by younger Jewish writers. The first is by PAUL GOODMAN, and it will be followed by contributions by Isaac Rosenfeld and Jacob Sloan. Mr. Goodman is a well-known poet, novelist, and critic. His most recent books are *The Facts of Life*, *Kafka's Prayer*, and, with Percival Goodman, *Communitas*. Mr. Goodman received a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and has taught there and in progressive schools.

This is why we persist in the questions, because our intuitions are not refuted by better arguments.

So much by way of introduction. Let me turn at once concretely to what I mean by the Jewish culture of a man of letters.

MOST simply, as I have argued elsewhere,* a tradition exists when children learn certain great stories, so that, when they grow up, the puzzles of existence are recast in these great stories, made inward by the childhood interest in them. To me the Greek stories have always been traditional, but even more important, as it is turning out, are the Bible stories. Secondly, it is not only the ancient Jewish stories that I find compelling, but also the specifically Jewish line of interpretation of, and commentary on, these stories. Thus, just at the time of writing this, I have been in a doldrums of not writing anything, of a desire, even in interesting conversation, to keep my mouth shut; this is accompanied by a sore throat, and the function of it, I guess, is to hold back a dangerous growl and sobbing. But the story that persistently presents itself is the Tower of Babel. I study this story; I find myself (in our great tradition) marshalling arguments against the Lord's resentful action; at the same time I am convinced that something is wrong with their, and my, seemingly innocent ambition, for "the Lord" (in our tradition) is only another name for the nature of things, that seems always cruel and violent to us who are out of tune with the nature of things; the guilty building is perhaps masturbatory; these flood-survivors seem to be the United Nations talking Basic English; etc., etc. So the stories of Abraham and King David have occupied, and will continue to occupy, my soul and pen, because I am a father and a poet. And

* "Western Tradition and World Concern," in my *Art and Social Nature* (New York, Arts and Science Press, 1947).

because I am a communal anarchist, I turn this way and that, not without *pilpul*, the account of Adam in Paradise.

Again, the Gospel story is inward to me; but I find that the line of gloss that releases the meaning and feeling of this story is precisely that which locates it in the 1st-century Jewish community, in the spectrum, so to speak, of Klausner's neo-Pharasaism on the one end to Schweizer's Jewish apocalypse on the other. And the Gospel miracle-worker and the Hasidic miracle-workers cast light on each other.

BY THE Jewish tradition of interpretation, I mean partly a dialectic and literary method, but especially a Jewish theology. Now I have never, in my memory, managed without a theology, having gone through a more or less typical advanced intellectual course of atheism, scholasticism, Calvinism. But I find that whereas with the Gentile theologies it is the heresies that enliven me—they have the vitality of the extreme—in the Jewish theology it is just the barest orthodoxy that has the vitality of the center. Let me single out four propositions: There is a creation, God is not a body, the Messiah will come, the rest is dubious and inessential. For quite different reasons, these four thoughts seem to be necessary to my struggle for happiness. I think that they are the center of Jewish orthodoxy, and I do not think they are elsewhere so purely expressed.

(a) The ordered creation—*ma-aseh bereshit* and *ma-aseh merkabah*—means to me that the natural and socio-psychological world exists and is the source of all the value there is. But this would be said by any naturalist. What the Jewish line of interpretation adds, it seems to me (e.g. in Maimonides and Spinoza), is that the Creation justifies itself, I do not need to justify it. The wonderful contribution of Kafka is that he stubbornly demonstrates, out of his brain and breath, the impossibility of our justifying it.

On the other hand, I should not deny that to a happy person in full joy the question of justification would never arise; but I am not such a person. And this brings me to the corollary of the proposition that most strikes home to me: the Jewish naturalism is a naturalism not of "science" but

of medicine, of physical therapy. For instance, I should say that ours is the only Western theology that absolutely justifies, and indeed obliges, psychoanalysis; for "whatever comes up" cannot be but for our good. (What a courageous article of faith!) To sum it up in the great sentence of Kafka, "There are problems that could never be gotten past were it not for an operation of nature."

(b) That God is not a body teaches us, first of all, not to worship idols. I remember, in my early schooldays, that it was this sentence that made it impossible for me to salute the flag, a diffidence that has since spread to very many institutional shows and "front" personalities. (I doubt that either the Conference of American Rabbis or the Rabbinical Assembly would subscribe to this interpretation, but that is their mistake.) I think I understand that it has been not an idea but natural social causes that have been the cause of such estrangement, but the crux is that this idea has always given me a rallying point to reality, so that my grounds of dissent could become more present and rational. Certainly this idea has served me in literature as a rich source of irony and Jewish jokes.

Here too I should not deny that a free, happy person would not bother his head about such abstractions, nor inflict on himself a conscientious super-ego; but as the case is, it is better to have an abstract and impersonal standard, *not* a father. A standard "beyond," as the Kaddish says, "the supplications—and consolations—that are uttered in this world."

(c) The Messiah will come. It means more than the good society which we political moralists, we anarchists, try fumblingly to advance with such knowledge and feeling as we can release for the work. It means that it will come by a miracle—for we have not observed, over the centuries, that the non-miraculous efforts of men of good will, sociologists—yes! even socio-psychologists—are accomplishing it. Nor are these efforts vain. "You are not obliged to finish the work," said Rabbi Tarfon, "but neither are you free to leave it off." Specifically, in my writings I find everywhere foolish Utopian community plans that I also do not for a moment admit to be impractical.

(I must add, to be exact, that there is a

related Christian notion that is equally vital to me, namely that we are visited by the Holy Spirit, in whom we know and make what was not known before. This is par excellence the dogma of poets and inventors, and without it I could not start any new work with a confidence of completing it. But this is a personal faith; the coming of the Messiah is its communal counterpart—a greater miracle, because the institutionalized people are sicker than we artists are.)

(d) And all the rest is dubious and unessential, e.g. even most of Maimonides' thirteen articles. To my mind there is nothing so thrilling, at the same time so liberating and so enriching, as the relative, syncretistic, permissive, and playful way in which even such a doctrine as the immortality of the soul is treated in Jewish tradition. Obviously, for cathartic reasons, *Yizkor* is the crucial moment of the year's synagogue attendance; just as clearly the occasional surviving spirits in the Bible are usually malevolent demons; and to Koheleth it is all a lot of nonsense. One could say of the Jewish creed—and there is no higher philosophical praise—what Green once said of the philosophy of Kant: "There are difficulties and seeming contradictions; but where nature is clear, Kant is evident; and where Kant is dark, you will find that the nature of things is dark." In comparison Christian theology is full of flattering illusions that turn out to be quite void of even imaginary content (e.g. ask a Catholic to explicate the state of beatitude). But with regard to such things, we have our cake and eat it too—in proper season: if I am writing a little drama, I can bring on my angels and the *Bat Kol* itself (herself?); but in a psychoanalytic interview, I can probe the superstition to its roots. Both are traditional.

BESIDES this operating inheritance of stories and theological principles, I find in my literary thinking two Jewish community ideas (which are by now woven inextricably with thoughts of communal anarchism, progressive education, and the theory of poor artist life). The first is a daydream of the medieval Jewish community: that one must live in a limited community whose juridical relations are brotherly face-to-face, restricted by some pe-

culiarity of function and purpose, but internationally federated with all other communities through a kind of personal ambassadorship. The limited community is the sphere of simple mutual aid (*Shebet ahim gam yahad*), the federation is the sphere of eloquence, art, and high humanity. The second idea, related to the first, is that every detail of living: the eating, the songs, the layout of the streets, is an integral expression of the whole of life; there is no distinction of private and public, vulgar and noble function, profane and sacred symbol. The idea is expressed in the multitudinous blessings that are said.

Yet it is the idea of such a community that seems great and lasting to me, not by any means the current Jewish applications of the idea nor the remnants of ancient application. For instance, I eat like the Americans, I believe that the patriarchal family has been calamitous and that current Jewish sexual mores are criminal, etc., etc. It is not among Jews as such that I would seek to live in such a community, but among persons functionally like-minded with myself, persons with similar family responsibilities, a progressive educational purpose, or again, free artists.

THESE then are certain important parts of Jewish culture that form me and that I transform. (There is one other that I pass by because the discussion of it would become technical, namely the Biblical and Yiddish languages in my style and rhythm.)

As I look back at these remarks, however, I see that they are not what people want to hear. They are specialist and "learned." There is nothing picturesque in them, no Jewish rye bread (long indeed may it rise!). On the other hand I have tried to show that this culture is positive and concrete to me, and it has marked, now for twenty years, whatever of my behavior is socially significant.

Frankly, I must say that those critics of my friends and myself who glibly speak of "typical alienated Jewish intellectuals"—these critics do not understand that Jewish culture has many departments and that in some of them we are not alienated, but indeed are the living power. I suspect, too, that those who use such phrases do not know what the work of the intellect is.

THE HERD OF INDEPENDENT MINDS

Has the Avant-Garde Its Own Mass Culture?

HAROLD ROSENBERG

THE basis of mass culture in all its forms is an experience recognized as common to many people. It is because millions are known to react in the same way to scenes of love or battle—because certain colors or certain kinds of music will call up certain moods—because assent or antagonism will inevitably be evoked by certain moral or political opinions—that popular novels, movies, radio programs, magazines, advertisements, ideologies can be contrived. The more exactly he grasps, whether by instinct or through study, the existing element of sameness in people, the more successful is the mass-culture maker. Indeed, so deeply is he committed to the concept that men are alike that he may even fancy that there exists a kind of human dead center in which everyone is identical with everyone else, and that if he can hit that psychic bull's eye he can make all of mankind twitch at once. (The proposition, "All men are alike" replaces the proposition,

IN SHAKESPEARE's England, a man waiting his turn in a barber shop would take a violin from the wall and entertain himself and his neighbors; in Louis B. Mayer's America, millions of men (and their families) passively see the same movie or watch the same television program at the same time. For the intellectuals of our day, this mass culture has been a threat (which some have evaded by self-isolation) and a challenge (which some have answered by studying the wicked magic that makes mass culture so effective). Yet, as HAROLD ROSENBERG here maintains, it is possible that the 20th-century intellectual, in his relations with the world of mass culture, has been himself unknowingly seduced and conquered just when he thought he was fighting the hardest. Mr. Rosenberg, poet and critic, was born in Brooklyn in 1906, and studied at the City College of New York and Brooklyn Law School. At present he is with the Advertising Council.

"All men are equal" in the "democracy" of mass-culture institutions, thus making it possible for rich or politically powerful mass-culture leaders to enjoy their advantages while still regarding themselves as "men of the people.")

On the other hand, the producer of mass culture has no use for experience, his own or another's, which cannot be immediately shared. What is endured by one human being alone seems to him unreal, or even an effect of madness. The "alienation" of the artist, his characteristic neurosis, which we hear so much about today, is an essential axiom of mass-culture thinking: every departure from the common experience appears to be an abnormality requiring some form of explanation—medical, sociological, etc. Actually, the concept that the artist is "alienated from reality" has little to support it either in the psychology of artists or in any metaphysics of art. As Thomas Mann said recently, it depends on *who* gets sick; the sickness of a Nietzsche may bring him much closer to the truth of the situation, and in that sense be much more "normal," than the health of a thousand editorial writers.

The image of the "alienated individual" is usually derived by American contemporaries from Marx. Marx, however, sees alienation as the condition not of the artist but of the common man of industrial society; for him it is the factory worker, the business man, the professional, who is "alienated in his work" through being hurled into the fetish-world of the market. The artist is the only figure in this society who is able *not to be alienated*, because he works directly with the materials of his own experience and transforms them. Marx therefore conceives the artist as the

model of the man of the future. But when current critics influenced by Marxist terminology talk of alienation they mean something directly contrary to Marx's philosophical and revolutionary conception. They mean not the tragic separation of the human individual from himself, but the failure of certain sensitive spirits (themselves) to participate emotionally and intellectually in the fictions and conventions of mass culture. And this removal from popular hallucination and inertia they conceive as a form of pathos!

Nothing could be more vulgar, in the literal meaning of the term, than whining about separation from the mass. That being oneself and not others should be deplored as a condition of misery is the most unambiguous sign of the triumph in the individual of the ideology of mass culture over spiritual independence. It is a renunciation of everything that has been gained during the past centuries through the liberation of mankind from the authoritarian community.

THE opposition of mass-culture making to anything individual goes far beyond mere rejection or even social condemnation. It claims to assert a truth regarding the very nature of human reality: that the real situation of the individual is that in which he is aware of himself in mass terms. The most explicit and aggressive formulation of this metaphysical bias is to be found in the Soviet Union, where the mass-culture principle has been carried to its logical conclusion. There individual experience is denounced officially as an aberration from real life.

Discussing "plays dealing with the situation arising from the return home of Russian soldiers," Drew Middleton reports (*New York Times*, Feb. 11, 1948) that "the fidelity or infidelity of the soldier's wife, his own amorous affairs at the front, were not considered essential problems of *real life* by the dramatic critics of the Kremlin" (my italics). Middleton then cites the list of situations with which So-

viet art is bidden to concern itself: the victory in World War II, socialist reconstruction, etc. The list comprises only situations common to Soviet citizens, and the artist is directed to create an emotional and pictorial equivalent of this "real" experience. Needless to add, the recent attack on "formalism" in music means that too much individuality must not be allowed to sneak into even the *manner* in which the artist deals with the mass experience.

It may be argued that what is wrong with Soviet art is not that it restricts itself to the common experience but that its version of that experience is false; were it faithfully to reflect the true experience of the Soviet masses it might be valid art. But how can one speak of a common Soviet experience without taking into account that it itself is formed by Soviet mass culture? Mass-cultural statements are constantly *in the process of making themselves true* by causing people to experience their common lives in those terms. To illustrate: several years ago the WPA Writers' Program interviewed old Negroes who had been slaves in the South before Emancipation. A large majority had an image of their own slavery identical with that of the romantic apologists of plantation life. One was left to assume either that the romantic picture is a true description of slavery, or that it became true to the ex-slaves by absorbing their actual experience into itself.

Thus we may take it for granted that the collective experience of the Russians resembles at any given moment the version of it presented by Soviet novels and movies to roughly the same degree that the common experience of Americans corresponds to the Hollywood or slick-magazine presentation of it. Each American knows that these smooth and *understandable* portraits are not faithful to *him*. But he does not know that they do not truly picture other Americans. In sum, mass-culture-making operates according to certain laws that cause it to be potentially "true" of the mass but inevitably false to each individual. It is not just Soviet mass

culture that is false. What is "experientially" (moral and political values are something else) wrong with Soviet mass culture is simply that it is mass culture—and what is wrong with the Soviet Union is that it checks the creation of any other kind of culture. But we, too, have less of "the other kind" than we imagine, as I shall show later.

LET me make it clear that the difference between mass culture and authentic art is *not* that the first deals with the community or mass while the second depicts only the single individual. There is a mass culture of "individuals" too, obviously—as in the myriad applications of the Boy Meets Girl formula. On the other hand, there is an authentic art, even in modern times, of masses and of crowds—e.g., the battle panoramas of Tolstoy, Zola, or Malraux, or the street movements of Romain.

What counts is not the number of people involved in the situation but the nature of the experience that goes into the work. The formulated *common experiences* which are the substance of mass culture must be distinguished from the *common situations* in which human beings find themselves. The common situation is precisely what the common experience with its mass-culture texture conceals, *and is often intended to conceal*. But the genuine work of art, going past the formulated common experience, may succeed in communicating the common situation—all too clearly from the point of view of the guardians of stasis. I doubt that those in authority would be so violently opposed to authentic art if, as they claim, it revealed only the private personality of the artist and had no further reference. On the contrary, I am inclined to believe that when art is condemned as "lacking broad meaning" or as "unrelated to real life" these accusations often disguise the fear that the exact opposite is true—that this deviation has too much meaning and bears too acute a relation to life to be reconciled with the common myth.

To penetrate through the common experience to the actual common situation requires a creative act—that is to say, an act that directly grasps the life of people during, say, the War or the Plan, that grasps the War from the inside, so to speak, as a situation with a human being in it. But the moment an artist, ignoring the War as an external fact known to all, approaches it as a possibility that must be endured over again in the imagination by anyone who would genuinely experience it, he puts the existing mass conception of it into question. Consequently, the result of such a creative act is to arouse not only hostility on the part of officials who have a stake in the perpetuation of some agreed-upon version of the War, but also a general distrust and uneasiness. For the work of art takes away from its audience its sense of knowing where it stands in relation to what has happened to it and suggests to it that its situation might be quite different than it has suspected, that it is jammed with elements not yet perceived and lies open to the unknown....

Exactly in so far as he touches the common situation of man in the 20th century, Kafka goes against the common experience; he undermines its self-confidence, which rests on a whole system of assumptions as "false to reality" as the formulas of behavior in a best seller; and for this reassuring common experience he substitutes only the tension of an individual struggling for self-knowledge, a cloudy and painful seeing and not-seeing. Along this rocky road to the actual it is only possible to go Indian file, one at a time. It means breaking up the crowd—not "reflecting" its experience.

IF THE essential assumption of mass-culture-making is that only the experience recognized as common is real, the failure to be conscious that this assumption is being made leads only to confusion. In the Soviet Union there is no confusion on this score. Non-mass art is outlawed and any

expression of non-mass experience dangerous. Here in the United States the principle of the common experience operates more or less in disguise to produce different levels of mass culture, including a specifically anti-mass-culture mass culture. From "significant" novels, through "high-brow" radio programs, to "little" magazine articles and stories, a variety of mass-culture forms pits the mass culture of small groups against the mass culture of the masses. The result is not the creation of an artistic culture but of a pyramid of "masses" of different sizes, each with expressions of its own common experience.

Now the interesting thing about this pyramid is that the farther each level gets above the mass base of the multi-millions the closer it is presumed to get to genuine art. Thus even radio and Hollywood have their Norman Corwin and Orson Welles, who by the scale of the mass-culture structure are true artists because they appeal to "small" audiences. And magazines designed for college professors and writers are assumed to be more culturally pertinent than those whose audience are housewives or prurient *bon vivants*.

Yet a single conviction falls like a plumb-line through all the levels of the pyramid, from its apex to its base: the conviction that the artist ought to communicate the common experience of his level, and that if he fails to do this it is because he is an egotist and "irresponsible." Each level of mass culture on the basis of this same conviction holds the level above it to be filled with "nuts," that is, with artists and an audience "cut off from the people," snobs who insist on "expressing themselves" and thus shirk the true labors of art and enlightenment. Thus an editor of *Look* once disclosed to me his mingled awe and contempt for the esoteric highbrows who write for the tiny audience of the *Atlantic Monthly*, and the same feeling prevails in the advertising agencies toward Corwin as a writer of "sustainers."

The irresponsible-artist, or artist-nut, formula, based on audience scale, works

both ways: on the one hand, anybody who has a "small" audience (from a million in radio to five in poetry) is automatically suspected of being a genuine artist; on the other, any artist whose experience seals him off from the mass, big or small, is regarded as a megalomaniac. A literary agent said the other day of a writer appearing in little magazines: "Oh, he writes for posterity. An even worse egotist than the rest."

It is amusing, however, to trace this same artist-egotist formula into an anti-mass-culture organ like *Partisan Review*. In issues closely following one another, *Partisan* reviewers meted out the following judgments: that Dostoevsky and Kafka were neurotics; that there was little in Thomas Mann's *Essays of Three Decades* that had meaning beyond the author's literary exhibitionism—"In the end," said the review (entitled "The Sufferings and Greatness of Self-Love"), "[Mann] continues to love only himself...."; that Paul Valéry failed "to convey any substantial doctrine beyond the existence of the particular man and writer" and therefore fell down both as artist and thinker; that "in the *Journal Gide's* self-analysis too often begins and ends with Gide," so that André Gide too had been destroyed by self-interestedness.

Each of these artists, according to *Partisan Review's* intellectual captains of thousands, is an egotist lost in himself, "alienated" from others, incapable of a valid formulation of the common experience of the modern intellectual and of a "substantial doctrine" for him, and to that extent a failure as an artist. In the phrase once popular in radical circles, it is "no accident" that these estimates of Dostoevsky, Kafka, Mann, Gide, and Valéry are shared with *Partisan Review* by Soviet criticism. Mass culture, whether of the flat plain of the One Big Mass or of the pyramid of the Many Small Masses, must deny the validity of the single human being's effort to arrive at a consciousness of himself and of his situation, and must be blind to his practice of a distinctive meth-

od of giving form to his experience. The insight of the "particular man" must be crushed by the "substantial doctrine," even when, unhappily, one happens to be without such a doctrine.

Thus the reduced audience scope of a mass-culture undertaking, be it a radio program or a publisher's book list, does not alter its mass-culture character; just as the popularity of a Durante or Chaplin does not prevent them from being genuine artists, regardless of the indifference of the little mass. True, *the* masses do not read Kafka or Henry James. But a literary magazine, no matter how "little," does not escape being a mass-culture organ simply by interesting itself in these writers, when in discussing them it reduces their work to formulas of common experience. This reduction is the very method by which Hollywood or the Church or the Communist party appropriates the artist and his creation to its own uses whenever it can—e.g., the capture of Dostoevsky by Hollywood, Rimbaud by the Church, Van Gogh by the CP—under the pretext of "bringing culture to the people." The peak of the mass-culture pyramid and its base are made of the same material.

INTELLECTUALS who set themselves against mass culture become contributors to it by shifting small-mass perspectives to previously neglected fields, as in the "novelization" of the Okies by Steinbeck or of the Chicago Irish by Farrell. This activity might be understood as part of the general expansion of mass culture, its imperialist dynamic, so to speak, by which humanity is increasingly converted into "the common man" through the discovery and penetration of new areas of experience in order to derive from them the raw materials of new cultural commodities.

The area which intellectuals have most recently staked out for themselves as belonging to culture *par excellence* is the common *historical* experience. While down below one still hears about love, crime, ambition, the top of the pyramid is reserved

exclusively for the history-conscious small mass. There the talk is of "*the* experience of the 20's" or of "the 30's," "*the* experience of the younger generation" or of "the depression generation," "the epoch of the concentration camp," etc. To be accepted by the intellectual mass, experience must come wrapped in a time package.

It is to the credit of a writer like Jean-Paul Sartre that when he makes contemporary historical experience his point of departure for literature he does so with full consciousness of what this means. Sartre knows that beginning with the common experience implies mass culture. Hence Sartre is in favor of reaching a big audience, of writing for the movies and for radio in order to inform and convert the popular mind. He rejects the individual as an object of literary interest and attacks Valéry and Gide on principled grounds. He insists on the "engagement" or participation of the artist in the social problems of his time and place and in political activity. In this respect his view corresponds to that of the Communists and the Gaulists against whom he is struggling.

American intellectuals are, however, reluctant to face the mass-culture consequences of their historical self-definitions. They retain a nostalgia for the personal and unique, for esoteric art, for small-group attitudes, even while they deplore the inadequacy of these standpoints. As individuals they see themselves in terms of what they have in common with others; in the mass they sense themselves despondently as individuals. Thus they cannot act creatively either for the individual or for the mass.

This spirit of mass-individual evasion is expressed poetically in the verse of Auden and Spender, which has had the widest and to my mind the most stupefying dead-end influence upon the so-called younger generation. Here is an excellent example of the voice of this spirit, picked at random out of a review of Spender's poems in the *New York Times*:

*The shame of what I never was
That when I lived my life among these
dead
I did not live enough—that when I loved
Among these dead I did not love enough—
That when I looked the murderers in
their eyes
I did not die enough—
I lacked
That which makes cities not to fall
The drop of agonizing sweat which changes
Into impenetrable crystal—
And every stone of the stone city
To moments held through time.*

According to the *Times* Spender here "rises to magnificence and *responsibility*" (my italics). To me this poem is pure cant. It brings in "these dead" to bestow significance upon the poet's feelings, which had nothing to do with them and which are *not described*—thus avoiding the individual experience through giving the impression of solidarity with mass experience; and then it claims for this nonexistent individual a fantastic power over the destiny of others, by his passion to "make cities not to fall." Such a combination of avoidance of responsibility for individual experience with avoidance of responsibility for social thinking is now known as "responsible" poetry. And, of course, every truly independent mind must believe in "responsible literature," as well as "alienation," the "failure" of radicalism, the obsolescence of the individual, etc.

IN THE December 1947 issue of COMMENTARY, Robert Warshow, writing of "The Legacy of the 30's," expresses an antagonism to mass culture *per se*. Unlike the French Existentialists, Warshow feels not only hemmed in but internally invaded by the intellectual commodities of contemporary society. Mass culture for him is the alien within the gate, the slot machine on the altar, the Trojan horse that brings the ready-made into the halls of the original. "Its mere existence—" he says, "this climate in which one had to

live—was a standing threat to one's personality, was in a sense a deep personal humiliation." Warshow correctly notes the presence of a "mass culture of the educated classes" and recognizes in its surface seriousness a further obstacle to individual experience.

Yet despite his horror of mass culture, Warshow's entire approach is an "us" approach, that is to say, a mass-culture approach—though his "us" is not the masses but the small mass of the intellectuals. "For most American intellectuals," he begins his article, "the Communist movement of the 1930's was a crucial experience." He is referring, obviously, to the fact that American writers, artists, students, had various relations with Marxist parties and Marxist ideas. I don't know, and neither does Warshow, what this contact has meant to each of these people in terms of the total structure of his consciousness—that is, we cannot say whether for any individual his "Communist experience" was crucial or not. Perhaps it was crucial for certain men who went to Spain and got killed. But even then, in the instances I happen to be familiar with, other experiences played at least as important a part in such decisions as "the experience of Communism."

Warshow is able to state flatly that this was "crucial" only because he is discussing "the" Communist experience as a *mass event*. Yet from this point of view, it seems that Marxism in the United States became a renunciation or negation of experience, a plunging of the individual into mass inertia, precisely because he yielded himself up to the general intellectual "climate." There wasn't any significant group experience of Communism in America except in the negative sense, and this is one of the main reasons why people ran away from it. Then why talk about it as "crucial"? Or, better still, why not talk about some other kind of experience? Because since it happened to an historical "us" it seems to Warshow most significant: "It is for *us* what the First World War and the experience of expatri-

ation were for an earlier generation. If *our* intellectual life is stunted and full of frustration,* this is in large part because we have refused to assimilate that experience . . . never trying to understand what it means as part of *our* lives." (My italics.)

Warshow then goes on to measure the success of Edmund Wilson's and Lionel Trilling's "assimilation" and expression of "that experience" as efforts in an essential task that lies before the modern intelligence.

Now I was alive in the 30's too and also underwent the intellectual impact of the Marxist movement, as well as popular-front novels and movies, the New Deal, peculiarities of the erotic in the urban human being, and a good portion of other contemporaneous phenomena. Yet I find that there is very little that is of interest to me in my thoughts and my feelings that is dealt with by either Edmund Wilson or Lionel Trilling. Yes, what they describe sounds familiar, one had heard about it, even run into it personally.

But somehow the experience of these men does not communicate with mine nor seem very pertinent to it—to think it important I should have to impose upon my reactions some external literary or historical or social "value." Maybe this is because Warshow is right, and Wilson and Trilling are dealing with "that experience," that is, with something common in the 30's, but not with any significant experience or hypothesis of their own. Now perhaps the faintness of my response to this historical souvenir only proves that my experience lacks universality or is even out of date. All right, then I confess—the tension of my experience never belongs to the right time or place. Besides my experience of "the 30's," it contains all sorts of anachronisms and culture fragments: the Old Testament and the Gospels, Plato, 18th-century music, the no-

tion of freedom as taught in the New York City school system, the fantastic emotional residues of the Jewish family. If one extended and deepened this compendium, one would get to a kind of tiny *Finnegan's Wake*, which, incidentally, in contrast to *Memoirs of Hecate County*, I do find very communicative.

At any rate, the rhythm of my experience is broken and complicated by all sorts of time-lags, symbolic substitutions, decayed absolutes, experimental hypotheses. Because I am so peculiarly (and also not so peculiarly) mixed up, I confess, too, that it doesn't matter to me much whether I belong to Wilson's and Trilling's generation or to Warshow's. There was a journalism of Americans in the First World War and an even wider journalism perhaps of American expatriation. Yet adding up the "assimilations" of all these literary epochs and generations that take me back to the cradle, for some reason they seem to have communicated less to me about my situation, to have less deeply penetrated my experience, and to have contributed less to my verbal and intellectual resources than, say, Poe, Rimbaud, Dostoevsky, Gide, Miró, Klee, and a lot of other people who didn't participate in this American experience of "ours," or William Carlos Williams or Wallace Stevens, whose poetry contains scarcely a word about their "generation," or E. E. Cummings, who said some very private things about his.

What I am getting at is that when someone says, as Warshow does, of some one common experience that "that experience is the most important experience of our time," such a statement can have only a mass-culture meaning. And once you've taken this position, to call for a writer to communicate that experience "as it really is, as it really feels," is simply to ask for a "better" mass culture, in the way that Hollywood or some Soviet writers' union periodically calls for a more real and more passionate and even a more original and inspired rendering of *The Most Epic Event Of Our Times*. If Warshow, hav-

* In my opinion, if someone's intellectual life is "stunted and full of frustration" it may be because he belongs to a crowd but it is not because of something that happened to a crowd.

ing properly rejected Trilling's novel for dealing with modern life as if it were entirely a question of which opinions to hold, is really interested in "making it possible for the writer himself to have a meaningful experience in the first place," he should stop trying to decide in advance what is meaningful to everybody and concentrate on what is meaningful to him. For individual experience it is necessary to begin with the individual. Maybe there is no individual in the old sense of the term. This cannot be gone into here. But whatever there is, one will not arrive at it by reflecting oneself in a "we."

No one will deny that common situations exist. It may be, too, that the most profound, or even the most ephemeral, individual experiences are, or may prove to be after they have been authentically set down, in essential respects duplicated in many men and sometimes perhaps in all men. In fact "most profound" may *ultimately* turn out to be the same as "most common." The question is not of uniqueness as a goal, of the artist as a lone wolf programmatically dissociating himself from society and the pathos of human life; it is a question of where to begin and toward what kind of communication to move.

Acceptance of the mass-culture dogma that the artist must become the medium of a common experience will result in the same contrived and unseeing art, whether the assignment is made by a movie producer, a party cultural official, or by the artist himself as a theoretician of social relevance. That genuine art can be created to order in *modern times* has never been demonstrated. Apologists for popular art are fond of referring to Egypt, Greece, medieval or Renaissance Europe, where the artist-as-craftsman was the creator of a high art, officially commissioned, and more or less immediately accessible to its intended audience. But these apologists neglect the fundamental differences between the sources and content of inspiration in the authentic communities of the past, on the one hand, and within the re-

lations that exist in modern industrial society, on the other.* Under present conditions a true work of art may accidentally attract a large audience, but more and more elements in it tend to overlap the audience's responses. Even works once popular become increasingly esoteric by comparison with, and under the pressure of, the mass consumption of manufactured novels, movies, radio programs, etc. For instance, Somerset Maugham recently argued in the *New York Times* in favor of abridging *The Brothers Karamazov*, *War and Peace*, and other world classics, on the ground that nobody read them in their entirety any more anyway, or had to.

THE present cultural situation seems to present to the writer the following alternative. Either accept the common experience as a point of beginning, embrace mass culture, start "enlightening" some public about itself, and forget about art and about experience "as it really is, as it really feels." The writer who makes this choice will obtain from outside his work—from politics, from sociology, from religion, from "public opinion," from the policy representative of some corporation or group—a set of "values" which he will endeavor, through such feelings, fancies, and "ideas" as he can muster to his subject, to communicate to a prefabricated audience of experience-comrades. Here communication means a formula, whether in the images of a work of art or in the rhetoric of opinions, by which the member of the audience learns from the author what he already knows, or could have found out—that together with others he is an ex-radical, or a Jew, or feels frustrated, or lives in a postwar world, or prefers freedom to tyranny. Repetition of these mass-cultural themes with all the resources of fancy may prove of practical value to humanity—as when a group of "bad" fictions, like anti-minority caricatures, are replaced with "good" fictions, images of men as equal

* I have outlined this problem in "The Profession of Poetry and M. Maritain," *Partisan Review*, September-October, 1942.

—and to this service the writer may choose to dedicate himself.

Or the writer may choose to break through mass culture itself. In that case he will reject the time packages and sociology packages in which experience is delivered fresh every morning, and begin with the tension of what most agitates, and conceals itself from him. He will voluntarily enter into a kind of Socratic ignorance. For he will accept the fact that he cannot know, except through the lengthy unfolding of his art work itself, what will prove to be central to his experience. Creating his art is then part of his very experiencing; it is his way of revealing his existence to his consciousness and of bringing his consciousness into play upon his existence. And this art communicates itself as an experience to others, not because one man's experience is the same as other men's, but because each of those others, like the author, is unique to himself and can therefore recognize in his own experience the matchless experience of another human being and even perhaps the presence of some common situation and the operation of some hidden human principle. The authentic artist arrives at the common situation *at the end* of his effort—e.g., the emergence of decadent French society in *Remembrance of Things Past*—or rather he does not arrive at it, for no one can arrive at the whole, but by way of his own humanity he moves spontaneously towards the humanity of others.

ONLY the individual can communicate experience, and only another individual can receive such a communication. The individual is *in* society—that goes without saying. He is also isolated and, like Ivan Ilyich, dies alone. I find it no more noble or picturesque to stress the isolation at the expense of involvement than to stress the sentiment for the social at the expense of isolation. Poses are a matter of taste, sometimes of achieving spiritual efficiency. I should like only to make sure that nobody is bullied by the abstract concept of social responsibility into becoming useless to himself and to his

fellow men, or even a menace. Obviously, the isolation of an artist's work, or his personal loneliness, if that happens to be his fate, does not deprive his accomplishment of social meaning. Nor in rejecting the "responsibility" of the representative of mass-thought for the sake of his concrete experience does he make himself an "irresponsible." (It is humiliating to have to repeat these truisms and to mention such examples of artistic responsibility by way of concrete experiencing as Gide's *Trip to the Congo* or Cummings' *The Enormous Room*—but I here testify to my own social responsibility by acknowledging the power of vulgar antitheses and doing my bit about them.)

The mass-culture maker, who takes his start from the experience of others, is essentially a reflector of myths, and is without experience to communicate. To him man is an object seen from the outside. Indeed it could be demonstrated that the modern mass-culture elite, even when it trots around the globe in search of historical hotspots where every six months the destiny of man is decided, actually has less experience than the rest of humanity, less even than the consumers of its products. To the professional of mass culture, knowledge is the knowledge of what is going on in other people; he alone trades his experience for the experience of experience. Everyone has met those culture-conscious "responsibles" who think a book or movie or magazine wonderful not because it illuminates or pleases them but because it tells "the people" what they "ought to know."

The makers of mass culture are its first and most complete victims. The anonymous human being to whom they bring their messages has at least the metaphysical advantage of being forced to deal daily with material things and real situations—tools, working conditions, personal passions. The fact that his experience has a body means that mass culture is to him like a distorting mirror in an amusement park; whereas the "enlighteners," whose world is made up entirely of mental constructions, live inside the mirror.

THE MONTH IN HISTORY

COUNTER-OFFENSIVE AGAINST COMMUNISM

The Ebb and Flow of the East-West Conflict

MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM

The Pattern of Conflict

IN LAKE SUCCESS and Belgrade and Berlin, the pattern of conflict was the same. The Western powers—which meant, above all, the United States—had ceased to give ground. The Soviet Union had not yet begun to retreat. The result was deadlock.

This was true of questions where there were basic conflicts of principle, and of those where the issue was strategic rather than ideological. And at times it seemed also to be true where only prestige was involved, and indeed little of that. But this last might be something of an illusion; for the disputes over prestige were generally ancillary to those over principle or strategic advantage, and it might well be that neither side bothered to yield where it might have done so with no real loss, simply because it recognized that surrender would bring no progress toward a settlement of the underlying issues.

This might explain the frequency of the Soviet veto, even in regard to questions whose

significance it was difficult to discern. For by exercising the veto when it did not matter, the USSR might sometimes succeed in avoiding an issue where it did, and could at least transfer attention, to some degree, from other issues to the procedural one.

Thus, again, the point at which negotiations broke down was often the very preliminary one of constructing an agenda. But failure to agree on an agenda often meant that the blame for a fundamental disagreement remained unapportioned, and that it was possible for an aggressor to continue to act aggrieved.

A case in point was the UN's commission on conventional armaments. Here, the Soviet Union continued to insist that the scope of the discussions be extended to include atomic weapons, while the Western powers resisted that proposal on the ground that the latter were already under consideration by the UN's commission on atomic energy. That body, of course, had failed to reach agreement because of Russia's refusal to accept any provision for effective inspection, coupled with her insistence on the immediate destruction of all atomic weapons in the possession of the United States. Obviously, there was little to be gained by simply transferring this dispute to a new arena, so that the attitude of the Western powers was easy enough to understand. But meanwhile, the Soviet representatives were able to concentrate the attention of the world—or that part of it which still bothered with the UN's less spectacular disputes—on the procedural question, and divert it from the fact that the same issue of effective inspection would in any case bar agreement on reduction of conventional

IN TIMES when month-by-month events give little comfort to the hopes of men in general, and perhaps of Jews in particular, it is the task of the writer of this department to winnow out the facts from the welter of belief, propaganda, actuality, and emotion that constitutes present-day public information and opinion. MAURICE J. GOLDBLOOM has had many years of experience as a news analyst. The judgments expressed here are his own, and in no sense represent or reflect official policy. Mr. Goldbloom was associate editor of the magazine *Common Sense*. He was born in New York City in 1911 and is a graduate of Columbia University.

weapons. At the same time, the Western nations permitted themselves to be maneuvered into publicly giving up the effort to reach an agreement for armament reduction, while the Soviet Union appeared as the advocate of continued negotiations.

Closely related to the UN's inability to make any progress toward disarming its member states was its failure to arm itself. Both were aspects of the insistence on national sovereignty of which the USSR was the most emphatic and uncompromising—though by no means the only—exponent. Creation of a force capable of implementing the decisions of the Security Council was the responsibility of the UN Military Staffs Committee, representing the permanent members of the Security Council. This committee, after meeting on and off over a period of three years, now found itself forced to report that it had not as yet been able to agree on where to begin. Such questions as the control and use of the proposed UN force had not been reached for discussion, since the powers were still occupied in disputing its composition. Certainly this issue, if not purely technical in nature, was predominantly so, and not innately a difficult one to resolve. But agreement on it would merely have opened the way for more fundamental and explosive disputes, not for the creation of an effective UN force. So there was little incentive to settle even that part of the problem on which agreement might have been possible.

At the Danubian conference in Belgrade, the issues on which the powers were disputing also seemed, on the surface, something less than vital. American insistence that any control body for the Danube include representatives of Austria and eventually Germany, and Soviet refusal to accede to this demand, occupied the time of the conference. But the real issue was whether the Soviet Union and its satellites would have exclusive dominion over the river, or whether it would be open to the free navigation of all nations. And that question was not one which would be determined by the presence or absence of Austria and Germany on a control body in which the Soviet bloc would in any case be dominant. Indeed, the whole Danubian conference appeared to have taken on the character of a sparring match in which each side's main preoccupation was with the accumulation of material for a white paper present-

ing its explanation of a breakdown which both regarded as inevitable. Meanwhile, the Russians had the river, except in its upper reaches, and seemed certain to keep it—at least, as long as the break between Tito and the Cominform did not lead him to seek an accommodation with the West.

The Central Problem

In his annual report, UN Secretary-General Trygve Lie pointed to the failure of Russia and the United States to achieve a settlement in Germany as the greatest single obstacle to international harmony. The extent of this failure was becoming clearer each day.

Its most obvious index, of course, was the continuing blockade of Berlin. In that city, the Russian offer to feed the entire population remained unimplemented, to nobody's surprise. Meanwhile, the planes of the Western powers brought in an average of four thousand tons of supplies each day, and the capacity of the airlift was still increasing.

At the same time, the British, French, and American envoys in Moscow called on Joseph Stalin for two hours to discuss the German situation. They were reported to have emerged smiling. But the smiles appeared to be wearing off after several subsequent conferences between them and Foreign Minister Molotov. For Russia made no move to ease the blockade; on the contrary, Soviet pressure in Germany was intensified. Nor did the Moscow negotiations seem likely to be more successful than previous attempts to reach an agreement. For it was reported that the Soviet Union was still demanding, as a basis for negotiations, that the Western powers agree to concede it a share of the Ruhr's production and participation in its control, as well as postponing their planned reorganization of Western Germany and accepting the new Russian-sponsored mark as the sole legal currency of Berlin. These were terms to which the West could not agree, for they involved the restoration of a situation in which the Soviet Union operated unchecked in Eastern Germany, while blocking the effective rehabilitation of the Western zones and their integration with Western Europe.

In Berlin, meanwhile, the gap between the Soviet sector and the rest of the city was becoming wider. Seeking to keep the door open for a compromise on the currency question, the Western powers had ordered that Soviet-

sponsored marks were to be acceptable for rationed goods and certain other expenses, as well as for three-fourths of all salaries. But this made the economy of the Western-occupied sectors of Berlin largely dependent on the Russian authorities, and when the latter blocked all accounts of Western firms (including the city government) held in banks in the Soviet sector, wages and bills in the Western sectors went unpaid. In the face of this situation, the Western powers had no choice but to bring in enough of the new West German currency to meet the urgent needs of Berlin. Since this was banned in the Soviet sector of the city, the economic division of Berlin was now almost complete. A man who lived in one part of the city and worked in the other found himself unable to use the money he earned for the purpose of paying his expenses. In this situation, a black market in the two currencies quickly arose. Then, to facilitate transactions, the British made them legal and licensed exchange shops in their section of the city. It soon developed that, despite Berlin's isolation from Western Germany, the city's inhabitants had so much more faith in the Western mark than in the Eastern that the former brought almost three of the latter.

Berlin also found itself with two separate police forces. When the Russians had originally occupied the city, they had installed Paul Markgraf, a former Reichswehr officer turned Communist, as Chief of Police. They had vetoed all attempts of the municipal government to replace him, and Markgraf, for his part, had never hesitated to carry out the will of the Soviet authorities. His police had repeatedly been implicated in the kidnapping of anti-Communist Berliners; they had also been notorious for their complacency when Communist mobs attacked their opponents. Now the City Assembly voted to remove Markgraf and replace him with the Social Democrat Johannes Stumm. The Russians, of course, refused to recognize this action, and Markgraf announced that any policemen taking orders from Stumm would be arrested. But the Western powers supported the action of the municipal government, and Stumm set up new headquarters for the Western sectors of the city. A similar split took place in the city's food department, the Social Democratic head of which was unilaterally "removed" by the Russians, and

seemed in prospect for other departments as well.

At the same time, the Western powers began to take retaliatory action. They had already shut off shipments from their zones to the Soviet zone; now they barred transit shipments between it and other countries via Western Germany. This, they said, was not intended as retaliation for the blockade of Berlin. Rather, it was the result of the Soviet failure to return freight cars to the Western zones, the strain on the Western railroads produced by rerouting of trains consequent on the closing of the Soviet zone's borders, and the impossibility of scheduling trains because the transportation sub-committee of the Allied Control Council—broken up by the Russians—was no longer meeting. Whatever its cause, however, this action undoubtedly strengthened the hand of the Western powers in any negotiations over Germany.

The Ideological War

In Germany, there could be no question that at least for the present Russia had lost out in the political struggle, whatever might be the result of the Battle of Berlin. The convictions of non-Communist Germans had been reinforced, those of even convinced Communists shaken, by the blockade. The Communist leader Wilhelm Pieck was reported to have told a meeting of party leaders from the Soviet zone: "This damned blockade has cost us more in three weeks than we were able to gain in the previous three years." And in the American sector of Berlin, the youth section of the Communist-controlled Socialist Unity party passed a resolution denouncing the blockade as a crime against humanity and declaring that those Communists who defended it were foreign agents with whom it was necessary to break off all relations.

Elsewhere in the world, the Communists were also suffering setbacks. In Finland, where they had lost a fourth of their strength in the elections, they demanded that they nevertheless be permitted to hold the Ministry of the Interior. But despite the presence of Russian forces in Finland, the other parties refused to agree to further Communist control of the police. And when the Communists sought to precipitate a crisis by refusing to enter the Cabinet unless their conditions

were granted, a purely Social Democratic government was formed with the support of the Agrarians. Together, these two parties commanded a safe majority of the votes in Parliament; any Communist attempt to overthrow the new cabinet would have to take place elsewhere. And although the Communists had threatened to hamstring the government by strikes, it seemed unlikely that they would succeed in this, since the majority of the workers supported the Social Democrats. Nor did the Communists have the control of the police, which had played a crucial role in all their other coups. Only if the USSR was ready to intervene directly did there seem any probability that the Communists would win their demands. For the moment, despite denunciations of the new Finnish government in the Moscow press, the Kremlin seemed reluctant to act.

But if the Communists had suffered a defeat in Finland, they were consolidating their power in Hungary. This did not mean that they were any more popular in the one country than in the other. But after free elections had resulted in an overwhelming defeat for them, they had taken over the key posts in the government with the aid of the Soviet occupation forces. After that, they had made the other chief parties expel their less subservient members, and follow wherever the Communists led. The Socialist party had been absorbed outright. However, the purged Smallholders party had been permitted to retain the presidency for Zoltan Tildy albeit he was reduced to a figurehead. Now even this was changed. It was suddenly announced that President Tildy's son-in-law had been caught spying for the West; Tildy "resigned" and was replaced by the renegade Socialist leader, Arpad Szakasits. All this, however, was merely mopping up. Hungary's fate had long been settled; nothing short of a withdrawal of Soviet troops could change it.

Nevertheless, if the Hungarian government, like others in Eastern Europe, was seated securely on Soviet bayonets, this did not mean that popular discontent was not rising. From all the lands of Eastern Europe, refugees were still escaping to the West. Tyranny was not popular, and the knowledge that the West European standard of living was rising under the influence of the Marshall Plan was a powerful spur. At

the same time, there seemed little chance of further Communist penetration in the Western countries as long as economic improvement continued. The first effects of the Marshall Plan were already apparent. In England and France, bread and many other commodities were derationed. In Western Germany, nominal rations rose by a fifth and the actual food supply in even greater degree. And industrial recovery appeared to be keeping pace with the improvement in food.

In Europe, the West appeared to be winning the political war. In Asia, however, the Communists were still on the offensive. In China, the graft-ridden government of Chiang Kai-shek no longer talked in terms of wiping out the Communists. Rather, it sought desperately to hold back their advancing armies. Here, the struggle was not between democracy and dictatorship; it was between an old-fashioned and inefficient military despotism and a modern and streamlined dictatorship, and the odds seemed to be with the latter.

In Indo-China, where the French had sought to restore their old colonial rule, they found themselves on the losing side of a ruinous war against the nationalist Viet Minh movement. And this movement was led by the veteran Communist Ho-Chi-Minh, although it appeared to include non-Communist elements as well.

In British Malaya, tin mines and rubber plantations were in constant terror of rebel Communist bands. Despite the use of airplanes and all the other appurtenances of modern war by the British, the rebellion seemed to be growing. One reason, perhaps, was that neither the planters and mine owners nor many of the British colonial administrators seemed to have learned anything. One of the first steps taken by the government in its endeavor to suppress the rebellion was the outlawing of strikes—a measure hardly calculated to rally the support of Malaya's workers.

Indeed, the past mistakes of the West in Asia had resulted in the growth of a Communist movement capable of making substantial trouble even where an enlightened government now held power. Thus, in Socialist Burma, a government which had at first sought to include the Communists found itself forced to outlaw them when they en-

gaged in armed rebellion, and it found their suppression no easy task.

In one Asiatic country, the Communists had never gained much strength. Japan had not had a strong Communist movement before the war, and the enlightened labor policies of the occupation had helped in the growth of a democratic labor movement rather than a Communist one. But the Communists seemed likely to benefit substantially from a sharp shift which now appeared to be in process in General MacArthur's labor policy. A directive from the General to the Japanese government resulted in ordinances whereby the cabinet—in apparent violation of the Constitution—denied the right of collective bargaining to public employees. In protest, the head of MacArthur's labor division, James Killen of the AF of L, resigned his post. And Japanese labor, which hitherto had regarded the occupation as its friend and protector, was now likely to accept the Communist picture of a reactionary and anti-labor United States.

Communists at Home

IF THERE was little doubt in anyone's mind as to the seriousness of the Communist challenge in other lands, the situation in the United States was less clear. American Communists had never won the support of more than a small percent of the population; both the exponents and the self-proclaimed enemies of Communism in the United States often seemed to belong to the realm of burlesque. Yet there could be no doubt that Communists and persons close to the Communist movement had succeeded, at one time or another, in gaining access to positions of power in groups of importance in the community. These included trade unions, cultural and philanthropic bodies, and organizations claiming to represent minority racial and religious groups. Some, too, had unquestionably at one time or another obtained key posts in local and even national governments. And, Communists being what they were, they had used these points of vantage in the interests of the Communist party and, directly or indirectly, of the Soviet Union.

One aspect of Communist activity much in the news was the gathering of information from government employees for transmission to Russia. The testimony of Miss Elizabeth Bentley before the House Committee on Un-

American Activities gave details on the operation of one section of the network which the Communist party had been constructing since the early 30's for the purpose of extracting confidential material from United States government files for the USSR. The spectacular aspect of the particular ring whose activities had been coordinated by Miss Bentley appeared to lie less in the importance of the information obtained than in the importance of some of the people who supplied it.

Not all of those named in the Bentley testimony appeared to have been actual Communists or fellow-travelers, or to have known what use was being made of the information they supplied. Indeed, it was possible that many even of the active Communists among them merely believed that they were giving the Communist party information which would be of use to it in its political functions. This implied a certain degree of naivety on their part. But it was hardly a greater degree of naivety than that which many of their non-Communist compatriots had displayed during the war years.

Making all allowances, however, it was clear that at least some of those involved had known precisely what they were doing and that if most of the rest had not, they had displayed a degree of irresponsibility which completely unfitted them for any position involving the handling of confidential information. And, like the Amerasia case and the Canadian spy ring disclosures, the Bentley testimony helped to document the role of the Communist movement as an instrument of the Soviet Union.

Many, however, questioned the desirability of the public presentation of Miss Bentley's charges. They held that, if any crime had been committed, evidence should be presented to a grand jury and an indictment obtained; pointing out that a grand jury had heard Miss Bentley and that no indictment had resulted, they claimed that the Congressional hearings involved the besmirching of innocent persons. To others, this seemed to involve a confusion of issues. They believed that, irrespective of whether there was legal proof of acts criminal under existing law, there was clear evidence of conspiratorial activities connected with the Communist party. The former question was properly one for the courts; the latter was one for the con-

sideration of the legislative and executive branches of government, and of the American people, in the determination of public policy. And though a refusal to answer on the ground of possible self-incrimination was legally permissible, it carried with it no presumption of innocence.

Certainly most of those who protested against the blasting of reputations by testimony before the Un-American Activities Committee—a reproach which had somewhat less substance in the present case, when persons accused were given an early opportunity to testify in rebuttal, than it had in previous instances—had never felt similarly in regard to the investigation of big business by Congressional committees. Nor, indeed, had they jumped to the defense of Fritz Kuhn and his fellow Nazis when they had received the attention of the selfsame Un-American Activities Committee. In some cases, of course, it was a question of whose ox was gored. But in others, what was involved was the belief of many liberals that Communists were fundamentally decent but misunderstood people. It was precisely this belief which the public presentation of the facts about the activities of the Communist party might be expected eventually to undermine.

Mr. Wallace's Party

ONE of those who believed firmly that American Communists were misguided at times, but had their hearts in the right place, was Henry Agard Wallace. To be sure, Mr. Wallace might have had difficulty in pointing out the specific respects in which he thought the Communists *were* misguided. Certainly these did not come to the fore at the convention of his new Progressive party.

There, the Communist-line steamroller operated by Lee Pressman had overcome all opposition, first in the Platform Committee (whose non-Communist chairman, Rexford Guy Tugwell, found himself and his sympathy for the Marshall Plan completely ignored), and then on the convention floor. When one delegate suggested that the platform contain a statement that the Progressive party's criticisms of American foreign policy did not imply an unconditional endorsement of that of any other nation, his proposal was indignantly rejected as an unwarranted slight on the Soviet Union. And Mr. Wallace, in his acceptance speech, went

out of his way to express his solidarity not only in general but in all particulars with the decisions of the convention.

Nevertheless, Mr. Wallace was not happy at the idea of complete Communist control of the Progressive party. This was not so much because he rejected the Communist position on any issue, but because he recognized that Communist support was costing him ten times as many votes as it gained him. Hence, from time to time, he sought to disassociate himself from his Communist backers without, however, disavowing them. In one such statement, he said that the United States was menaced by three internationalisms—Communism, clericalism, and capitalism. Stating that although he disagreed with their method, both Communists and Catholics were working for a better world, he said that he would attack neither in such a way as to cause hate. To the capitalists, whom he termed the most dangerous threat, he made no promises.

Mr. Wallace's running-mate, Glen Taylor, was not a Communist either. Indeed, some of the arguments he used to support his and their position must have given the Communists pain. Thus, he cited the refusal of the two Soviet schoolteachers Michael Samarin and Oksana Stepanovna Kasenkina to return to the USSR as proof that the Russian people were unwilling to die in order to impose Communism on the world. It was a good argument, but not one that Stalin would enjoy.

A State of Semi-Truce

IN MOST parts of the world, the UN had seen its prestige fade because the rivalry of America and the Soviet Union had prevented it from taking action. In Palestine, the two powers had, at least on the surface and for a moment, cooperated. The UN had, in a sense acted. But its prestige had not been noticeably raised by the results.

It was now clear that UN decisions were not self-executing; it was also becoming rather obvious that the UN could not or would not create the instruments for their enforcement, even on Lilliputians. True, it had secured the acceptance of two truces by invoking the threat of an arms embargo against the side which refused to cease fighting. But whereas the first truce had been fairly generally observed, at least so far as

overt military action was concerned, violations of the second continued to occur daily on many fronts.

Moreover, the situation was deteriorating, not improving. Both sides had demanded that a term be set to the truce, and threatened to resume their freedom of action if this were not done. In the case of the Arabs, this was merely a continuation of the position they had held all along. Popular discontent in the states of the Arab League was increasing; a continuation of inaction on the part of the Arab governments might prove fatal to them domestically. At the same time, they recognized that the relative military situation of Israel was improving. Caught between the upper and the nether millstone, they were only too likely to choose desperate courses.

Israel, on the other hand, felt that the military balance had already shifted so far that the truce was merely delaying an eventual military triumph. Moreover, many Zionists appeared to feel that the presence of the UN mediator and truce commission formed a brake on the realization of territorial ambitions beyond the limits set in the General Assembly's resolution. More and more, Israel's claims were based on the success of Jewish arms, rather than on any UN decision. It was perhaps this feeling that more could be obtained without the UN framework than within it which led Moshe Shertok to propose direct negotiations with the Arabs, by-passing Count Bernadotte. On the other hand, this may have been merely a gesture intended to show the world Israel's readiness to negotiate, since it was obvious that the Arabs would reject direct conversations as implying a prior recognition of the Jewish state.

In the face of an increasingly unfavorable situation, Count Bernadotte continued his efforts to bring about at least a limited amount of peace in the Holy Land. From no side did he receive much encouragement. American opposition checkmated his attempt to secure a force of two or three thousand to enforce the truce. Indeed, he still was unable to secure even the tiny contingents

of observers already promised by the United States and France.

Among the Arabs, only Abdullah and his Arab Legion seemed inclined to cooperate with the Mediator. Truce violations by the other Arab states, and even more frequently by the Arab irregulars whose military weakness did not make it possible to ignore them, were continued.

But the mediator, and other representatives of the UN, seemed to be coming into more and more frequent conflict with Israel. The case of the five Englishmen kidnapped by Irgun from a building under UN protection during the first truce, and subsequently held for trial by the Israeli government, continued to cloud relations even though three of the five were released for lack of evidence. (They then returned to their posts in Jerusalem's electric plant, despite the advice of the British Consul that they leave Palestine.) An even greater source of potential conflict lay in the refusal of Israel to consider the demand of the mediator that it permit the return of the 350,000 Arab refugees estimated to have fled Israel. The Arab DP's lacked even camps, and had no organized international aid. The hundred thousand pounds which great Britain offered for their relief was tiny compared to the sum—inadequate as it was—available for DP's in Europe.

Another source of trouble was Jerusalem. Here, at least in theory, the Arabs had agreed to both demilitarization and the mediator's proposal that all troops be instructed not to return fire in case of truce violations. The Israeli government—perhaps from fear that it could not control the Irgunists concentrated in Jerusalem—had agreed to neither proposal. Instead, it had proclaimed Jerusalem occupied territory and appointed a military governor. This might be interpreted as a demand for Jerusalem in any final settlement. Or it might be simply a device for bringing the Jerusalem Irgun under government orders.

In any case, while the situation in Palestine sometimes seemed to pass all understanding, it could hardly be said to be moving rapidly toward peace.

FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

GOLD RUSH DAYS

Some Tintypes of Jewish 49'ers

ISRAEL T. NAAMANI

WHEN gold was discovered in California in 1848, adventurous men from every corner of the world came swarming in, and almost overnight transformed the land of somnolent missions and indolent presidios into rowdy mining camps and bustling boom towns. Among the first to reach the bonanza region were more than a few Jews. Like all the others who had set out for the latest and most dramatic frontier, they experienced many hardships in getting to their destination: they had come by foot or by prairie schooner over the great plains, by ship from Panama or around Cape Horn. Louis Rose, a pioneer in San Diego and its city treasurer and postmaster at various times; Emanuel Linoberg, who came from Poland and wound up in Sonora as member of the town council;

AMONG the 49'ers of the California gold rush there were naturally Jews—some of them plain, hard-working citizens whose names are lost to fame, others as colorful personalities as appear in the annals of Mark Twain and Bret Harte. Here ISRAEL T. NAAMANI tells us a bit about both kinds. Dr. Naamani is director of the Jewish Educational Society of San Francisco, and he has been using his opportunities to study the source documents of the period. The material presented here, it need hardly be said, is only a fraction of what is available. Dr. Naamani was born in Zhitomir, Russia, in 1913, received his early education in Palestine, and then proceeded to the United States, where he studied at Marquette, Indiana, and Chicago Universities, earning his doctorate in history and political science. He has written for the Palestinian publications *Haaretz* and *Haboker*, and also for scholarly journals in this country.

Morris Schloss, friend of the Mexican bandit Joaquin Murietta and later, by a typical frontier reversal of role, a member of the San Francisco Vigilantes—one can name hundreds who entered the region with the first waves of gold-seekers.

Indeed, when the High Holidays were celebrated in 1849, there were already more than a hundred Jews in San Francisco alone, while many others were scattered among the towns that had sprung up around the mining regions. They met little intolerance or prejudice in those free and easy days. The miners would "give with an open hand for any church that was started, whether they ever expected to go inside of it or not," one old-timer recalled, "and no matter what the denomination. It was all the same to them whether it was the Catholic Church or the Methodist or the Jewish Synagogue. 'Sure,' they'd say, 'give em a house to pray in.'"

AUGUST HELBING came to California by ship. He was a German Jew, born in Munich in 1824; his father had been court jeweler to King Ludwig I. August had received a good education and was graduated from industrial school with honors. In 1848 he had become an active member of the revolutionary movement; and when the uprising was suppressed, he and a friend, Moritz Meyer, fled to America. They landed at New Orleans, but the news of gold in California soon set them traveling again.

In Panama they found a speculator who sold them passage on a ship for \$450, an astronomical figure for those days. The following morning the train brought a load

of passengers from New York, and among them a man who held a ticket—bought in New York—that called for Helbing's state-room. The ship's purser ordered Helbing to give up the room, but he refused. Then the captain put in an appearance and began to threaten him. "At this," Helbing told a reporter many years later, "I took a brace of pistols and told them I would kill the first man attempting to enter my room. I had paid for it and had a right to its possession. . . . The captain was not eager for bloodshed; he placed the passenger somewhere else, and my friend and I remained where we were."

That night Helbing went out on deck for a walk. In a corner he noticed a man and woman trying to shelter a child from the drizzling rain. Helbing spoke to them and was surprised to find that they were Jews. They had paid for their passage, yet once aboard ship they had discovered that they'd been tricked. "I went to my friend," Helbing recounts, "and stated the case. He was satisfied to give up his berth. A few minutes later the little family was in our stateroom and we were on the deck rolled up in blankets. The lady was very thankful to us. She was Mrs. Hugh Simon, the first Jewish lady to reach California in the gold rush days."

Helbing omits to explain that the ship was traveling in the dead of winter and that he and his friend remained on the open deck for the twenty-one days of the voyage. "I was young then," he simply says, "and as strong as a lion. I had taken two prizes as an athlete in Munich and had gone to America in a spirit of adventure." August Helbing was one of those who stayed in San Francisco after the gold rush days were over and built up a flourishing business in dry goods.

MARCUS KATZ, later to become San Bernardino county treasurer and inspector for the United States District Commissary, hearing news of the discovery of gold, immediately took passage on a steamer bound for Chagres in Central America. It was a small steamer, but one thousand two hundred passengers were crammed aboard. The fare was five hundred dollars, which included sleeping accommodations, but only for those lucky enough to find them. After the ship

docked at Chagres, the passengers transferred to native canoes and paddled their way to Garguina. From there they trudged the rest of the way to Panama on foot.

At Panama, Katz tried to get a steamer berth on a ship to California, but none was available. By this time, the gold rush was at its height and steamer tickets were being sold at auction and bringing as much as two thousand dollars each. Finally, Katz managed to find a place on a French sailing vessel bound for San Francisco. He spent four months at sea on this ship before he reached his destination. But he didn't stay in San Francisco for long. In 1851 he moved to San Bernardino, pitching his camp on a ridge near a ranch owned by one Lugo.

Somewhat fancifully, Katz describes the livestock grazing on Lugo's pastures as consisting of "mustang horses, horned cattle, sheep and goats and unclaimed stock, brown and grizzly bears, mountain lions, wild cats, coyotes, and foxes." The settlers often raised their own grain and vegetables, horses and cattle, but Katz also notes another kind of "raising." "Sometimes," he writes, "they stole these from their neighbor, Lugo—this, however, was not a criminal offense. On the contrary, the party who stole but a few cattle or horses was considered a very social neighbor. The party who stole a band of horses or cattle was followed and if overtaken, lynched. Otherwise he was considered a hero, and if he got successfully away with his prize he was entitled to a membership in the Four Hundred."

Katz, too, had managed to do some trading after his arrival in San Bernardino, buying flour and wheat and selling them to the prospectors. "The eight-cornered fifty dollar gold pieces called 'slugs' were then plentifully in circulation. I began to feel a little 'sluggish' myself, but"—he adds—"I was soon relieved of that feeling."

This Jewish pioneer also records the fact that the first newspaper published in San Bernardino was the *Scorpion*, edited by an anonymous trio named "Tom, Dick, and Harry." Subscription terms were "one bale of hay, two dozen eggs, one thousand snakes and a sack of onions," and it was impressed upon future subscribers that "the Bank of England was the only authorized agent to collect subscriptions." No sooner had the

Scorpion begun to gain in popularity than an opposition paper entered the field: *The Illustrated Hog-Eye*, edited by "Harry, Dick, and Tom." Subscription rates for the "rival" paper were, Katz tells us, "a cow and a half; Rothschild the only authorized agent to make collections." He ends his account by asserting that "no small abuse was exchanged between these papers." The owners of both publications were Henry Tungridge, Griff Williams, and Marcus Katz.

SPLIT-EAR" SOLOMON was one of those who trudged their way to California across the plains. He had been a shoemaker in Boston, and, unlike most Jews in that trade, was "making a good living." But his wife was a brawling, shrewish woman, so when the cry of gold reached his ears, he left both spouse and shoes and started out for California. In St. Louis he joined one of the numerous California "parties." After weeks and months of grueling travel, the company was attacked by a band of Indians. Miraculously, Solomon succeeded in getting away unobserved and escaped. For a day or two he wandered about in the wilderness, until, only some ten miles from a camp, he fainted from exhaustion. A big Irishman, Ed Farley, found and revived him, and from that time on, the two became inseparable. The Irishman nicknamed his Jewish friend "Split-Ear" because of a tiny split or scar in Solomon's left ear lobe. Farley would tease his companion, maintaining that Solomon's wife had tried to bite off his ear.

Once, it is told, "Split-Ear" and Farley discovered a veritable bonanza in Nevada and rushed to town to register their claim. Farley was to proceed straight to the recorder's office while Solomon would buy some provisions and then find a place to sleep. On his way to the claim office, the big Irishman made a detour through one of the saloons and before long was "likkered up" and boasting of the discovery to a newly-acquired friend. The barroom companion succeeded in extracting a description of the exact location of the find from the loquacious Farley and then hurried off to register the claim for himself.

Several months later "Split-Ear" and Farley struck pay dirt again. This time Farley got spruced up *after* they had filed their location notices. Walking out of the saloon

wide and lofty, Farley met a stranger who claimed to be a boyhood friend only a few weeks from Ireland. He took big Ed in tow, brought him up to his room, and regaled him with the "latest news" from "Dublin town." When they finally parted company, Farley had sold his share of the mine to his "friend" for one thousand five hundred dollars cash. A few days later, Solomon sold his share to a mining company for an alleged forty thousand dollars! But, the story went, he gave half of his fortune to his somewhat unsophisticated companion. Not long afterward, Farley lost his life protecting some innocent Mexicans against the attack of a band of prospectors.

Later in his career, "Split-Ear" became a justice of the peace in one of the mining towns of Nevada. An apocryphal story is told of him—similar to that told of a number of other gold rush "Solomons." One day, two litigants and their witnesses burst into his house. Solomon was seriously ill and had to remain in bed during the hearing. The plaintiff, a tall and muscular miner, accused the defendant of stealing from the supply of gold-dust that he had deposited in the latter's safe. After questioning the witnesses, the judge decided the case in favor of the miner. The defendant, Solomon ruled, was to return the stolen gold dust and pay the court a fine of \$50 and costs. At this point the miner entered an unusual last minute plea. "Y'r Honor, Jedge," he said, "it ain't his dust I want. If ye'll jes' let me whup 'im up a bit, under the kiver of the law, I'll fergit the dust and even pay the fine and costs." Solomon regarded the miner wistfully for a long moment and then said: "If the parties to the dispute wish to compromise, the Court has nothing against it." The miner then pounced upon the defendant and gave him a thorough beating, while Solomon, in the excitement, forgot the dignity of his office and jumped out of his sick bed to see that no one interfered with the true course of justice. Well satisfied, the miner paid the fine and costs himself.

PERHAPS the most eccentric and best-loved character in the devil-may-care town that was San Francisco in the third quarter of the 19th century was Norton I, Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico. He was a ruler who wrote his own decrees

and proclamations, issued money, levied taxes, exacted dues, ate without cost at restaurants, had free access to theaters, rode without charge in public conveyances, was greeted with sustained applause on a "state" visit to the California legislature, and was voted a suit of clothes by the city council of the capital of his realm, San Francisco. This royal forty-niner, this benign and gracious monarch, was the son of Orthodox Jewish parents.

Joshua Abraham Norton arrived in San Francisco on November 23, 1849. His parents were English Jews, the father a trader in London. Joshua was born in 1819 and a year later the family emigrated to South Africa, where the elder Norton achieved prominence as a pioneer farmer and one of the founders of Port Elizabeth. From 1838 to 1848 the father was in business in Cape Town and became a leader of the Jewish community of that city. But there was friction between the adventurous Joshua and his pious parents. A friend of the family told years later of hearing young Joshua make facetious remarks about the lengthy Jewish prayers, for which he was violently scolded by his father.

The gold fever seized young Norton early in 1849. Both his parents had died by then and he was free to take the long voyage around the Horn California-bound.

The early pioneers in San Francisco describe Joshua as a shrewd, resourceful, and prosperous man of great personal and financial integrity. He had many business pursuits, dealing in all the commodities that came his way. Business then was carried on as a constant gamble, full of unpredictable skyrocketings and dizzy downward plunges; one day an item sold for fifty cents the next for fifty dollars. It was the great opportunity for a clever trader, with fortunes made or lost on a hunch or a guess. By 1853 it was estimated that Norton was worth between two hundred fifty and five hundred thousand dollars. At that time he decided to get a "corner" on rice. He and a partner purchased all the rice available in San Francisco and in transit to the city, paying excessive prices to consummate the monopoly. But large cargoes of rice kept on arriving, and prices continued to drop disastrously. For two years Norton tried valiantly to meet his obligations, but finally a catastrophic fire

consumed whatever assets he had left. By 1856 he gave up and disappeared, bankrupt and broken in spirit.

On September 17, 1859, there appeared in the San Francisco *Evening Bulletin* the following proclamation:

"At the peremptory request and desire of a large majority of the citizens of these United States, I, Joshua Norton, formerly of Algoa Bay, Cape of Good Hope, and now for the last nine years and ten months past of San Francisco, California, declare and proclaim myself Emperor of these United States; and in virtue of the authority thereby vested in me, do hereby order and direct the different states of the Union to assemble in Musical Hall, of this city, on the 1st day of February next, then and there to make such alterations in the existing laws of the Union as may ameliorate the evils under which the country is laboring, and thereby cause confidence to exist, both home and abroad, in our stability and integrity. [Signed] Norton I, Emperor of the United States."

The *coup d'état* was bloodless. A shrewd editor of the *Bulletin* put the paper at the new ruler's disposal: other papers in the city soon followed his example. Rough, big-hearted, cosmopolitan San Francisco surrendered completely to the new monarch's charm. His costume—described by Lee Friedman in his book *Jewish Pioneers and Patriots*—was "a glory to behold. He dressed his part in a coat of navy blue, cut in military style, with prominent brass buttons and huge gold-plated epaulettes. . . . Ordinarily he wore a small blue cap trimmed with gold braid, but upon formal occasions he appeared in a beaver decorated with a rosette and bright plumes. A flower in his lapel and a multi-colored handkerchief dangling from his breast pocket, completed his outfit. Commonly he carried a gold-headed cane which was superseded, when business of importance demanded, by a massive sword, the gift of an admiring blacksmith."

IT WAS evident from the start that Norton's first concern was the welfare of his subjects. His familiarity with history, his understanding of economics and current events, his lucidity of expression, both oral and written, were astonishing. His proclamations

and decrees were timely, and quite often made sense. One proclamation, which met with much favor on the part of his subjects, perhaps is as relevant today as it was when first promulgated:

"Norton I, *Dei Gratia*, Emperor of the United States and Protector of Mexico, being desirous of allaying the dissensions of party strife now existing within our realm, does hereby dissolve and abolish the Democratic and Republican parties. . . ."

Emperor Maximilian's political manipulations in Mexico aroused Norton's anger and, in order to save that poor country from utter chaos, he extended his rule across the border, assuming the additional burden of "Protector of Mexico." On the whole, however, his diplomatic relations with foreign powers were very cordial. He even initiated preliminary negotiations with the illustrious ruler of Great Britain, Queen Victoria—his object, matrimony. And his affection for his English cousins across the sea prompted him to reprimand the ruler of Afghanistan, at that time at odds with Great Britain: "Norton I informs the Ameer that he is dictator of the peace of Europe; that he will make it *Mighty Warm* for him if he precipitates a war."

To Norton also belongs the credit for terminating the Civil War between North and South, for negotiating peace between France and Prussia, and for averting economic disasters both home and abroad.

The Emperor showed no partiality to any creed or race. On Saturday he usually attended services at a synagogue, while on Sundays he visited the Protestant or Catholic churches. He was extremely reticent when questioned about his own ancestry. Nathan Peiser, a Jew and a friend of Joshua from his Cape Town days, told the press in 1880, shortly after Norton's death, that when he came to San Francisco in 1866 he was amazed to find Norton in such an exalted position. When he approached the Emperor, the latter didn't recognize him at first, but when Peiser recalled their early friendship, Joshua invited him to his lodging place. Peiser, naturally enough, was anxious to hear Norton's story. When they arrived at his rooms, the Emperor carefully closed all windows and doors and then gave Nathan a remarkable "explanation." In reality, Norton said, he was the crown

prince of France. When a small boy, he had been sent to South Africa to escape a feared assassination. There he was adopted by the Nortons. Peiser couldn't contain himself and blurted out: "I think you are crazy." "Yes," sighed Norton, "so do a great many others."

Norton died in 1880. Thirty thousand people attended his funeral. Newspaper headlines and editorials expressed the universal grief of his subjects. The *Call* wrote: "No citizen in San Francisco could have been taken away who would be more generally missed."

IN LOOKING through the first editions of the daily newspapers in the larger cities, the weekly "gazettes" in the mining towns, the city directories, the almanacs, etc., one comes across many advertisements by Jews announcing "rock bottom prices," "large assortments of gentlemen's clothing," etc. In common with all those who had come to California, the Jews, too, had been excited by grandiose dreams of acquiring sudden, and colossal, wealth. But the glow of gold didn't blur their vision; many of them realized that the flow of precious metal would soon slow down to a trickle. They knew, on the other hand, that the great potentialities of the fertile and unexploited country would eventually attract multitudes of immigrants. They turned, therefore, to the pursuits they knew best.

A British artist, J. B. Borthwick, who traveled through California in the early 50's was not altogether flattering in his description of the Jews he met in the mining communities, especially in a place called Hangtown. "The clothing industry," he wrote, "was almost entirely in the hands of the Jews In traveling through the mines from one end to the other, I never saw a Jew lift a pick or a shovel . . . [and] in a country where no man . . . was in the least ashamed to roll up his sleeves and dig in the mines for gold, or engage in any other kind of manual labor, it was a very remarkable fact that the Jews were the only people among whom it was not observable." Practically every man, he continued, "after a short residence in California became changed to a certain extent in his outward appearance. . . . But to this rule also the Jews formed a very striking exception. In

their appearance there was nothing at all suggestive of California."

Borthwick's description "stretches the fact," to use Mark Twain's euphemism. At approximately the time of his visit to Hangtown (later renamed Placerville) quite a number of Jews, among them Lewis Gerstle, the future founder and president of the gigantic Alaska Commercial Company, were wielding both pick and shovel in futile attempts to strike gold. And even the discerning eye of the British artist was apparently not sharp enough to pick out all the Jews from among the miners. He would scarcely have recognized a Jew in Isidore Meyrwitz, who, together with Peter Lassen (after whom Lassen County is named), discovered Indian Valley in 1850, and who later drowned in Honey Lake in a desperate attempt to save his Indian wife. And there were many others who escaped his notice.

Nor did the glow of gold blur the Jews' religious consciousness and solidarity. Before driving the last stake of their makeshift tents, many of them got together to organize services. In the autumn of 1849, not one but two separate High Holiday services ("Minhag Ashkenaz" and "Minhag Sfar") were held in San Francisco, one in a tent and the other in a room above a store where gold-dust was assayed. Out of these early services were to come the present Emanu-El and Sherith Israel congregations. Dr. Jacob Voorsanger, rabbi of Temple Emanu-El at the turn of the century, tells a characteristic story. Joel Noah, brother of Mordecai Manuel Noah of "Ararat" fame, had organized a religious service in 1849 on the day of atonement, but on returning home to break the fast he met a number of Jews who had just arrived in the city. They informed him that they were on their way to "Kol Nidre" services. Convinced he'd made a mistake in his calculations, Noah accompanied the newcomers to *their* services, and fasted a second day.

In the 1850's "mining congregations" mushroomed all over the gold-digging area. Some are still in existence, but most disappeared long ago. Religious services were held in Jesu Maria, Marysville, Fiddletown, Nevada City, Jackson, Coloma, Oroville, Shasta, Grass Valley, Folsom, Sonora, San Diego, Stockton, Sacramento, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Most of these communities

also had Jewish burial plots—a prime necessity in those days—and even when the gold rush had ended and the boom towns were deserted the remaining Jewish families continued to take good care of them.

The first Jewish burial ground in San Francisco was purchased in 1850. It was located where the present Vallejo and Gough streets intersect. Once, it seems, a Jewish gambler was shot and killed, and August Helbing, whose valor and charity we have noted earlier in this account, made preparations for his burial in this cemetery. But a man named Lewis, an English Jew, objected to the interment of a murdered and sinful person in consecrated ground. Helbing, however, did not listen to these objections and proceeded with the arrangements. Lewis then sent word that if Helbing attempted to enter the cemetery he would be thrown out. Despite these threats, Helbing secured a hearse, packed a few pistols in his belt, and started his trip to the burial grounds. Lewis, accompanied by a group of friends, met Helbing at the gates of the cemetery, but the pistols and the determined look on Helbing's face were enough to change their minds for them. The corpse was buried without interference.

IN ITS issue of March 15, 1851, the San Francisco *Evening Picayune*, writing about the founding of a synagogue, observed: "We are highly gratified to notice that the large and respectable class of our fellow citizens . . . are taking spirited measures toward the construction of an edifice suited to the convenience of their solemn religious services, the most ancient and revered known among the worshippers of the 'one living and true God.' We are glad for them that they have chosen to cast their lot with us under a government that gives them the fullest protection in the exercise of their faith . . . and which affords them equal opportunities with all other citizens to develop to any extent of their aspirations, their political, social, religious, and civil interest."

But one San Francisco judge was not motivated by similar lofty sentiments. A jury in an important case was on the point of returning a verdict when it was discovered that Julius Levy, one of the jurors, was absent. A messenger was dispatched

and found him at one of the synagogues. When approached, Levy refused to go to court because it was Yom Kippur. The presiding judge then ordered the sheriff to compel him to come. But Levy was no longer to be found, and the judge ordered a fine of five hundred dollars for contempt of court. A motion to remit the fine was quashed on the ground that, since a Christian was compelled to render a verdict on Sunday, no one, no matter how extraordinary the circumstances, could claim special privileges. Later, however, the judge did remit the fine.

In reporting the case, the *Evening Bulletin* said: "The fact that today is an occasion of solemn fasting and prayer, during which the Jewish people are compelled to abstain from all temporal business, it seems to us ought to be considered by the judge as a valid excuse in a free country like California. For four thousand years the Jews have observed this day, in every part of the world—barbarous, civilized, or enlightened. Surely, California is not the land to set the example of forcing them to violate the consciences."

In many communities the founding of benevolent societies preceded even that of organizing religious services. New Jewish arrivals were welcomed and helped to secure lodging and to get placed economically. Those newcomers who observed the dietary laws were provided with kosher food.

In the early days of San Francisco there were scarcely any children in the city. One illustrative story comes from as late as 1869: In a theater, a baby in his mother's arms began to cry. Hearing the infant's screams, a man in the orchestra pit jumped to his feet and shouted, "Stop those fiddlers, and let the baby cry. I haven't heard such a sound in ten years!" The orchestra stopped and the infant then gave an ap-

preciative audience a howling performance.

According to the *Chronicles of Emanuel*, there were perhaps a dozen Jewish children in San Francisco when the congregation was organized in 1850, but by 1851 the number had grown enough to warrant an educational program. Louis Cohn, a native of New York, and at that time engaged in merchandising, organized a class of some twenty youngsters, and on Sunday mornings he and the *hazan* of the congregation taught them Hebrew and religion. In 1854 a group of Jews, representing the entire community met and organized a Hebrew school that held classes daily in the afternoon and on Saturday and Sunday morning. Rabbi Julius Eckman was put in charge of the new institution.

TEN years after the first mad rush for gold, the rich mines had been exhausted, and where bristling communities once thrived there now stood only ghost towns to serve as reminders of the fabulous days. Already, the more footloose among the 49'ers had struck out for new destinations. But the influx of ambitious, energetic men had left a permanent mark on California: an era of agriculture, commerce, and industry had been launched. To this new development, the Jews have contributed not a little.

Indeed, the list of those who remained in California after the gold rush and plunged into the work of building up the new territory is long and varied. Lewis Gerstle and Louis Sloss, founders of a successful fur-trading business in Alaska; Adolph Sutro, mayor of San Francisco and builder of a tunnel which bears his name in Nevada's silver-mine region; Solomon Heydenfeldt, chief justice of the state's supreme court—these are but a few of the latter-day pioneers who have helped to make California what it is. But that is another story.

CEDARS OF LEBANON

DAYS OF AWE

The High Holidays in Jewish Tradition

S. Y. AGNON

THESE sayings and legends pertaining to the High Holidays are taken from a large and representative collection to be published this month by Schocken Books under the title *Days of Awe*, edited by Nahum N. Glatzer. This volume is an abridged version of S. Y. Agnon's massive Hebrew work, *Yamin Noraim*. It is translated into English by Rabbi Maurice T. Galpert, revised and completed by Jacob Sloan.

In his preface, Mr. Agnon, one of the most distinguished Hebrew writers of our age, writes: "For the benefit of those who wish to be informed of the matters of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur and the Days Between, I have assembled some sayings from the Torah and from the Prophets and from the Writings, from

the Talmud Babylonian and Palestinian, from the halachic Midrash and the aggadic Midrash, and from the Zohar and from other books written by our Early Rabbis and Latter Rabbis, of blessed memory. . . .

"To make this book palatable to all, I have abridged lengthy passages and at times altered the style of the Rabbis; for those holy authors, their generation being fit and all men eager to hear words of Torah, had not the time to improve their style. Yet, although I have not kept to the style, I have kept their meaning very well indeed. . . ."

These selections, for which full citations are given in the forthcoming volume, are published with the permission of Schocken Books.

Rosh Hashanah

SAID Rabbi Kruspedai, in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: Three books are opened on Rosh Hashanah: one for the wholly righteous, one for the wholly wicked, and one for the intermediates. The wholly righteous are at once inscribed and sealed in the book of life; the wholly wicked are at once inscribed and sealed in the book of death; and the intermediates are held suspended from Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. If they are found worthy, they are inscribed for life; if found unworthy, they are inscribed for death.

It is out of kindness toward his creatures that the Lord remembers them and reviews their deeds year after year on Rosh Hashanah, that their sins may not grow too numerous, and there may be room for forgiveness, and,

being few, he may forgive them. For, if he were not to remember them for a long time, their sins would multiply to such an extent as to doom the world, God forbid. So this revered day assures the world of survival. For this reason it is fit that we celebrate the Rosh Hashanah as a festive day; but since it is a Day of Judgment for all living things, it is also fit that we observe Rosh Hashanah with greater fear and awe than all the other festive days.

It is written in the sacred books:

"The thirty days before Rosh Hashanah, the great Judgment Day when man is permitted to turn in Teshuvah—to what are they comparable? To the thirty days of grace which a Court grants a debtor in which to pay his debts and be freed of his creditors."

Rabbi Meshullam Isaachar ha-Levi Hurwitz of Stanislav [19th cent.], before beginning to recite the prayer, "Hear Our Voice," during the penitential prayers of "Remember the Covenant" [on the eve of Rosh Hashanah] opened the Ark with tears and supplications and related:

A certain king had an only son, tender and delicately reared from childhood. And his father loved him and raised him and reared him in the ways of righteousness, and led him to the bridal canopy; and all he wished was to see his son going in the straight way. "And he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes" (Isa. 5:2). The good qualities that his father planted in his son he exchanged for ugly, and he went after the stubbornness of his evil heart, deserted the wife of his youth and clung to a foreign wife. His father the king seeing his erring deeds, his heart turned to hate his son, and he banished him from his house and from his palace, and sent him to another land far from his country.

The son wandered for many years from village to village and from city to city. His clothes became torn and tattered. His face changed, until it was not to be recognized that he was the son of a king. When many days had passed and he had had his fill of wandering, he remembered his father the king, and his palace, and began to think about his condition, and why his father became stronger day by day. He made up his mind to return to the house of his father, and to return in complete repentance.

And when he came before his father the king, he cried and begged his mercy, and fell at his feet, and asked to be forgiven for the sin that he had sinned. But his father did not recognize him, because his face had changed greatly. Then he began to scream bitterly, "Father, father, if you do not recognize my face, you must remember my voice, for my voice has not changed." Then his father recognized him, and had pity on him, and gathered him into his house.

Then the rabbi said:

"So is it with us. We are sons to the Lord, our God, the King above all kings. The Holy One, blessed be he, loved us and desired us, and exalted us above every folk, and led us to the bridal canopy, and gave us his sacred Torah that corrects a man, that

he may go in the straight way of righteousness; but we have turned aside from the highway he leveled before us, we have departed from his goodly commandments, and have been banished far from our land, and our iniquities have turned away these things, so that our face has been changed and our comeliness has turned in us into corruption.

"And now with the coming of the Sacred Days we are regretful of our deeds, and are returning to our Father that is in heaven, and cry to him, 'Hear our voice! If you do not recognize our appearance, you must recognize our voice, for we are your children; spare and have compassion on us, and receive, with compassion and willingly, this our prayer.'"

The reason for the blowing of the ram's-horn [on Rosh Hashanah] was revealed to me in a dream: It is as though two friends, or a father and son, who do not wish that what the one writes to the other should be known to others, were to have a secret language, known to no one but themselves. So it is on Rosh Hashanah, the Day of Judgment; it was not the will of the Omnipresent that the Accuser should know of our pleas. Therefore He made up a language for us, that is the ram's-horn which is only understood by Him.

Once the Baal Shem Tov [18th cent.] commanded Rabbi Zev Kitizes to learn the secret meanings behind the blasts of the ram's-horn, because Rabbi Zev was to be his caller on Rosh Hashanah. So Rabbi Zev learned the secret meanings and wrote them down on a slip of paper to look at during the service, and laid the slip of paper in his bosom. When the time came for the blowing of the ram's-horn, he began to search everywhere for the slip of paper, but it was gone; and he did not know on what meanings to concentrate. He was greatly saddened. Broken-hearted, he wept bitter tears, and called the blasts of the ram's-horn, without concentrating on the secret meanings behind them.

Afterward, the Baal Shem Tov said to him: "Lo, in the habitation of the king are to be found many rooms and apartments, and there are different keys for every lock; but the master key of all is the ax, with

which it is possible to open all the locks on all the gates. So it is with the ram's-horn: the secret meanings are the keys; every gate has another meaning, but the master key is the broken heart. When a man truthfully breaks his heart before God, he can enter into all the gates of the apartments of the King, above all kings the Holy One, blessed be he."

"For You remember all the forgotten things, and there is no forgetting before your throne of honor." At first the poet says, "remember all the forgotten things"; from which one would gather that there is forgetting before God; and afterward he says, "and there is no forgetting before your throne of glory"; from which one would gather that there is *no* forgetting before Him. How is this possible?

These words refer to commandments and transgressions. If a man has committed a transgression and forgotten it, and has not done Teshuvah, the Holy One, blessed be he, remembers it. If a man has observed a commandment, and does not mention it, the Holy One, blessed be he, remembers it. If a man has committed a transgression, and applies the Writ, "My sin is ever before me" (Ps. 51:5) to himself, the Holy One, blessed be he, lets it pass from his presence and forgets it. If a man has observed a commandment and praises himself for it, the Holy One, blessed be he, forgets it.

That is the meaning of the saying that God remembers all the forgotten things, that is to say, he remembers what men forget. "And there is no forgetting before your throne of glory"; God forgets what men remember.

The Days Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

SEEK ye the Lord while He may be found" (Isa. 55:6). Said Rabbah bar Abuha: "He may be found" during the ten days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

It is a widespread custom from the earliest days, from the time of our saintly rabbi [Judah ha-Nasi, 2nd cent.] on, that, beginning with the months of Nisan and Tishri, no cases are tried and no trials are held, so that no man may bring suit against his brother and friend—except for those matters

which the Court cannot dismiss, because of their great urgency.

Nor does any man take an oath in the Court until after Yom Kippur for fear of bringing down the punishment of God upon the world because of swearing.

But Rabbi Mordecai Jaffe [16th-17th cent.] wrote:

It seems to me that it is very much better to judge and give decision in human affairs, that there may be peace among men on Yom Kippur. For another reason: Lo, our sages of blessed memory, have said (Deut. Rabbah V.5): "Where there is justice, there is no judgment; and where there is no justice, there is judgment. That is to say, if we do justice on earth below, there is no judgment in heaven above; but if there is no justice below, there is judgment above." This being true, if we do not judge below, lo, the quality of divine justice will be directed toward us, God forbid! Therefore, it seems to me that it is better to judge below and to silence the judgment above.

Yom Kippur

THE pious Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heshel of Apt [18-19th cent.] used to say: If it was in my power, I would do away with all the afflictions, except for the afflictions on the bitter day, which is the Ninth of Av—for who could eat on that day?—and the afflictions on the holy and awesome day, Yom Kippur; who needs to eat on that day?

... The Reader chants Kol Nidre in the chant handed down by our fathers from past generations. They begin the prayer while it is still daylight, and continue into the night. They all chant Kol Nidre three times. The Reader begins softly, and raises his voice higher the second time, and even higher the third, chanting Kol Nidre with trembling and fear and devotion, while the congregation say it with him in a whisper.

The first time the Reader chants Kol Nidre he ought to chant in a very low voice, like a man who is amazed at entering the palace of the king to ask a favor, and is afraid of coming close to the king; and so the Reader speaks softly, like one asking for something. The second time he ought to raise his voice a little higher than the first time. The third time he ought to raise his voice higher and higher, like a man

who is at home and accustomed to being a member of the king's household.

The reason why it is the custom to chant Kol Nidre on the night of Yom Kippur is because Yom Kippur is a day of forgiveness and Teshuvah, and it is necessary for a man to purify himself of his iniquities. . . . If a man has made a vow during the year and remembers his vow, he must fulfil it; and if he does not fulfil it, Yom Kippur does not make atonement for him. For so we have learned: "Those who are liable for sin-offerings and unconditional guilt-offerings must bring them, even if Yom Kippur intervenes, after Yom Kippur. Those who are liable for suspended guilt-offerings are exempt" (Mishnah Keritot VI.4). This teaches us that Yom Kippur does not make atonement for the sin-offering and the unconditional guilt-offering; and vows are like sin-offerings. It is necessary to fulfil the vows if they are remembered, for a man is under obligation to fulfil a vow from the time he makes it, for Yom Kippur does not make atonement for vows. For this reason, the Geonim of the academies instituted the practice of saying Kol Nidre on the night of Yom Kippur, for remembered vows are fulfilled and the vower is exempt, but what if he does not remember them? What is he to do then, that he may be atoned and be pure on Yom Kippur? So the Geonim instituted the practice of making public annulment of vows that were not remembered. [Rashi]

The commentators undertook to comprehend how confession and regretfulness could help the person who is doing Teshuvah, for the law is that a speech cannot void an act. The sinner is guilty of many evil actions, so how can confession, which is a form of speech, help him? But our rabbis, of blessed memory, said that the Holy One, blessed be he, makes a new creature of the man who does Teshuvah (Pesikta Rabbati), and the result is that his speech of confession is the cause of a powerful and great act of creation, and of course all his evil actions are voided.

On Yom Kippur the night is the same as the day. For during all the days of the

year the gates of compassion are open during the day; during the night they are shut. But on Yom Kippur, the night is the same as the day; for the gates of understanding are open from nightfall on, and the night is the same as the day, to our benefit.

This was the prayer of the High Priest when he left the Sanctuary in peace on Yom Kippur: "May it be your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that no exile shall come upon us, neither on this day nor in this year. And if exile is to come upon us on this day or in this year, may we be exiled to a place of Torah. May it be your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that no dearth come upon us, neither on this day nor in this year. And if dearth come upon us, on this day or in this year, let it be as the result of our fulfillment of your commandments. May it be your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that this year be a year when prices are low, a year of plenty, a year of commerce, a year of rain and warm weather and dew, and that your people Israel may not need one another's help. Do not heed the prayers of wayfarers. . . . And [I pray] for your people Israel, that they do not rise to rule over one another."

For the people of the Valley of Sharon he would pray: "May it be your will, O Lord our God and God of our fathers, that their houses may not become their graves."

When the Afternoon Prayer is finished, the Closing Prayer is prayed. This is a prayer which was added to the other prayers on the holy day in order to awaken God's compassion during the time of the closing of the gates. What the closing of the gates means is explained in the Palestinian Talmud: "Rab says: It means the closing of the gates of heaven. And Rabbi Yohanan says: The closing of the gates of the Temple" (Berakhot IV. 1). And now that our Temple is in ruins, and the habitation of our glory is taken, we direct our hearts to heaven, praying that before the gates of the heavenly Temple are closed, prayers may enter on high and be accepted with compassion and favor.

THE STUDY OF MAN

WHAT THE NAZI AUTOPSIES SHOW

The Totalitarian Myth and the Nihilist Reality

IRVING KRISTOL

BEFORE the war, discussion of the "nature of Nazism" threw up many intensely held and sharply conflicting viewpoints: Nazism was a disguised dictatorship of finance capitalism, it was a revolt of declassed intellectuals, it was a cover for a revived German militarism, it was a new kind of non-capitalist non-socialist social order, and so on. The debate was carried on with great acuity and on a very high level of subtlety. It must come as an unpleasant shock, therefore, to hear the distinguished British historian, H. R. Trevor-Roper, say in an aside that Rauschning's *Revolution of Nihilism*—that vulgar and sensational book authored by an ex-Nazi—has turned out to have been, on the whole, a reliable portrait of Nazism.

The Nazis, as they are revealed in postwar autopsies, had no economic, social, or political

THE experience of Nazism did not end on May 8, 1945; it has remained with us, both as burning memory and an appalling possibility. If its brutality and callousness are not without parallel in history, we had led ourselves to believe that mankind had "progressed" far enough to make such horror impossible in our more "enlightened" day. Many books and briefer studies have addressed themselves to the questions, "How could it have happened?" "What potencies of ideology, program, or leadership won Nazism its tremendous victories?" IRVING KRISTOL here scrutinizes some of the historical material made available since the end of the war—plus a number of psychological, sociological, and political analyses—in an attempt to find out "how?" and "why?" Mr. Kristol, an assistant editor of *COMMENTARY*, was born in New York in 1920. His article, "How Basic is 'Basic Judaism'?" appeared in the January 1948 number.

program. Or rather, they had a program with only two points. The first was a private point in the mind of Hitler: military expansion eastward, to carve out of Russia a huge province and re-enact the drama of the Teutonic Knights with a revised, happy ending. By the wealth and opportunities thereby obtained, he hoped to settle once and for all the possibility of, or the need for, Germany's ever having an internal politics of its own. All Germans would be completely involved in rule and exploitation, with the Nazis as overseers over sub-overseers.

The other point, the public and by far the more important one, was racism, i.e., anti-Semitism. Only a few contemporaries—Jacques Maritain, Maurice Samuel, Vladimir Jabotinsky, and some others—understood the true significance of anti-Semitism for the Nazis. The civilized world as a whole saw it simply as a nasty appeal to prejudice, a bit of dirty fighting on the part of unscrupulous politicians. They did not see that without anti-Semitism the Nazis could never have captured and maintained power. It was the one point in their entire system of double-talk that they really believed in (though it too was compounded of double-talk); it was the source of their special emotional dynamism and distinguished them from the other nationalist parties of Weimar Germany. Indeed, there was no Nazi ideology aside from anti-Jewish ideology: all the scientific, historical, and sociological tomes of the Nazi academies had no other point of reference. Nazism existed to exclude the Jew, to hurt him, and even, if necessary, to be hurt by him, for that too set the seal on exclusion. Up until the very end, Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels, and Company maintained that the Third

Reich was, quite literally, fighting a war to the death with international Jewry.

Nazi "theory" otherwise was a grab-bag of everything that sounded useful: Rosenberg's "Aryanism," Sombart's Prussian imperialism, Othmar Spann's "pure" fascism, Stefan George's aristocratism; it celebrated the purely subjective, the purely utilitarian, the "estrangement from the absolute" (Rosenberg). Nazi politics was the politics of the freebooter: its aim was absolute power in a period of social disintegration when established centers of authority had dissolved, and the masses of people lay passively awaiting violation. The essence of this attitude was best expressed by Ernst Juenger: "We find ourselves in the last phase of nihilism, characterized by the fact that while the creation of new systems and rules has already been carried far, the corresponding values have not become visible. . . . In such a situation, pain is the only standard that yields secure orientation."

THE word "totalitarian" has obscured the nihilistic character of Nazi politics, since it seems to imply some sort of program for a drastic re-making of the social order.* We are still imbued with the rationalist political theory of the 18th century which ascribed to each government its "reason" and "purpose," and this has been strongly reinforced by Marxism with its theory of the state as an instrument to further the ends of the ruling class. Our concept of government, even "totalitarian" government, is still a positive one: the suggestion that a certain group rules because it has, by dint of violence and intrigue, successfully exercised an unbridled lust for power is regarded with suspicion, and searching parties continue to set

*The application of the term "totalitarian" to both Stalin's Russia and Hitler's Germany seems to me a source of confusion. True, the effects of both systems on the free individual are similar. But in its ideology, motives, and mainsprings of power, there is an essential difference between Communism and Nazism. Communism can claim a certain continuity with significant aspects of Western civilization—which may possibly make it a more profound and enduring menace to freedom and liberty. It has an elaborate ideology (Marxism) that claims absolute truth, and whose historical origin is linked to the flowering of "scientific" and "humanitarian" sentiments; thus, it has an initial appeal to "good" people. Furthermore, it receives constant encouragement from the present industrial society, with its twin drives toward a centralized "welfare state" and a "democratic" mass culture.

out energetically to find out who is "really" pulling the strings and for what purpose.

The Nazis, it is now clear, neither defended capitalism on principle nor destroyed it on principle. They were not interested in economic principles but in economic facts. Up to 1939 they wanted an economy that would keep the German people reasonably content and give them a chance to consolidate their position vis à vis the military, the civil administration, and the remnants of the democratic opposition. The bankers were able to give them this, so the bankers ran the economic system. When the needs of a two-front war became imperative, the bankers went out and the technocrats, led by Albert Speer, came in to mobilize for total war. When it was clear that the war was lost, the Nazis tried desperately to pull the entire German economy, including its very physical plant, down to ruin with them; that was the meaning, and the only meaning, of their "scorched earth" policy.

Burton Klein, in an article, "Germany's Preparation for War," in the March 1948 *American Economic Review*, demonstrates that, until 1939, Germany's "war economy" was a myth constructed mainly for foreign consumption. German aircraft production at the beginning of the war was about the same as Britain's while its rate of tank output was actually lower. When Hitler told the Reichstag and the world that he had spent ninety billion Reichsmarks for rearmament, it was a blatant lie—but the lie worked. When German troops were sent into the Rhineland (we learned at the Nuremberg trials), they had instructions to retire at the first sign of a French soldier; but the French were paralyzed by their "unpreparedness." Similarly, before Munich, the German generals, terrified at the prospect of war with England, drew up plans to assassinate Hitler and Himmler; when Chamberlain capitulated, Hitler's "infallibility" seemed more than enough to compensate for any military weakness.

The Germans did not have a war economy, partly because Hitler thought in terms of a blitzkrieg and partly because Schacht, that "financial wizard," was a conservative economist who trembled at the thought of deficit financing and the specter of inflation. His recovery program consisted of public expenditures (covered mainly by taxation) coupled with strict wage and price controls to ensure greater employment and production rather than

higher wages and prices. The program worked and the recovery was a real one for the German civilian: production of such civilian goods as autos, furniture, radios, etc., all rose considerably above the 1929 peak, while the share of national output directed toward rearming was not much higher than among the Western powers.

There was no mystery about German economics (though there was considerable mysterious talk about German economics). Economic recovery under the Nazis was the result of operations that any sensible and alert democratic government could have taken. That fact is, perhaps, the most poignant comment on the entire subject.

IF "totalitarian economics" was a fabricated myth, then "totalitarian politics" was only slightly less so, on the evidence marshalled in *The Last Days of Hitler* (Macmillan, 1947), by the Oxford historian and British Army Intelligence Officer, H. R. Trevor-Roper.

Nazi politics were not organized on any principle other than power. The questions of delegating authority and administering the functions of government were settled by a dog-fight among those who shared in the power. Writes Trevor-Roper: "Only policy, not administration, was effectively controlled from the center. . . . The structure of German politics and administration, instead of being, as the Nazis claimed, 'pyramidal' and 'monolithic' was, in fact, a confusion of private empires, private armies, and private intelligence services." (Of these latter, there were thirty competing organizations supplying the Foreign Ministry with information, almost all of it erroneous.) In turn, the leaders determining policy were themselves under a whole set of hidden and irresponsible influences. Who will ever be able to estimate the influence on world history of one Dr. Theodor Morrell, Hitler's personal physician, who made a fortune on quack patent medicines with which he systematically poisoned the *Fuehrer*? Or of Himmler's astrologer, Wulf, or his masseur, Kersten—on whom he became more and more dependent?

The Nazi regime as described by Trevor-Roper, was—especially after 1941—a royal court rather than a government, with power concentrated in the hands of Hitler, and all the courtiers (Goering, Goebbels, Himmler, Bormann) intriguing for the succession. There is probably no more fantastic spectacle in all history than

the one painted in brilliant detail in *The Last Days of Hitler*: the court in "session" in Hitler's bunker, Berlin burning and crumbling before their eyes, communications with the outside world practically shut off, the Russian armies in the suburbs, defeat a matter of days or hours, Hitler moving imaginary divisions on his military map—and all the Nazi leaders plotting furiously to be the heir to the power that they were sure Hitler would leave behind him! Each had his cabinet picked, posts allotted, and the terms of his "deal" with the Western powers worked out in detail.

With "statesmen" of this order at the top, it is no wonder that Nazi "totalitarianism" was not a very efficient affair. Samuel A. Goudsmit, an atomic scientist, tells in his book *Alsos* (Henry Schuman, 1947) of the incredible disorganization of Nazi scientific research. ("Alsos" was the code name of the War Department mission that followed the army into Europe in search of evidence of Nazi preparations for atomic warfare.) There was no coordination between the different branches of the armed forces or between the armed forces and the universities. Party hacks who "did not believe in modern physics" because of its "Jewish-intellectual bias" were given posts of authority. German scientists were indiscriminately drafted while Hitler's favorite dancers and astrologers received exemptions. One discovery excited and frightened the Alsos mission: they found that the Auer chemical company was frantically acquiring thorium in occupied France and the Low Countries. But it turned out that all that Auer had in mind was to incorporate thorium in a new toothpaste with which it hoped to dazzle the market.

Yet, Nazi "totalitarianism" made one claim that was only too well founded: Hitler was Germany's *Fuehrer* and his word was law. The longer we stare at Nazism the more our eyes focus on Hitler. He was its creator, his authority was supreme and unquestionable for every moment of its history; his notions and his whims dictated Nazi policy in every sphere; and there can be little doubt that his death would have been a death-blow to the regime itself. Hitler was Nazism. The war was *his* war—the generals and bankers were fearful and helpless. The extermination of the Jews was *his* project—as late as 1942, Goebbels was thinking of expelling them to Madagascar. The decision to fight to the bitter end, to see Germany forever destroyed rather than yield, was

his decision. To the last second of his life, completely isolated in his Berlin bunker, every Nazi leader followed his wishes, or what they thought were his wishes.

Trevor-Roper sums this up: "Liberal refugees, theoretical Marxists, despairing reactionaries have pretended, or persuaded themselves, that Hitler was himself only a pawn in a game which not he but some other politicians, or some more cosmic forces, were playing. It is a fundamental delusion. Whatever independent forces he may have used, whatever incidental support he may have borrowed, Hitler remained to the end the sole master of the movement which he had himself inspired and founded and which he was himself, by his personal leadership, to ruin. Neither Roehm nor Himmler, neither the army nor the Junkers, neither high finance nor heavy industry, ever controlled that demonic and disastrous genius, whatever assistance they may at times have given or received, with whatever hopes or credulities they may have solaced their misgivings, their frequent disappointments."

How and why this fussy, brutal, sentimental, hysterical, petty bourgeois could hypnotize his close associates, his followers, his party, and his nation is something a future biographer will have to work hard at to make clear to us. (Our contemporary biographers, like Konrad Heiden, have not, for all their good works, been successful in this respect.) The slow disappearance of the "great men" theory of history, ever since Carlyle, has not prepared us to cope with a phenomenon like Hitler. And it is more than likely that Carlyle himself would be at a loss—if not for words, then for an acceptable explanation. For the Nazis were in no sense "great men"; they were neither 20th-century Attilas nor Torquemadas nor Genghis Khans, and the more we ponder them the more incredible does the very fact of their leadership appear.

WHEN one studies the case of The Nazi there comes a sickening emptiness of the stomach and a sense of bafflement. Can this be all? The disparity between the crime and the criminal is too monstrous.

We expect to find evil men, paragons of wickedness, slobbering, maniacal brutes; we are prepared to trace the lineaments of *The Nazi* on the face of every individual Nazi in order to define triumphantly the essential features of his character. But the Nazi leaders were not diabolists, they did not worship evil. For—

greatest of ironies—the Nazis, like Adam and Eve before the fall, knew not of good and evil, and it is this cast of moral indifference that makes them appear so petty and colorless and superficial. The image of *The Nazi* is great and grotesque in our minds, but the Nazis in person turn out to be quite small and often ludicrous. That is what made the Nuremberg trials such a dismal affair. In the newsreel coverage of the trial we saw a harassed, uncomprehending crew of unshaven individuals—without dignity, fanaticism, obsessive hate, or the stature that large-scale wickedness often bestows. In comparison with John Dillinger, Hermann Goering looked like an indignant pickpocket. And to read through the proceedings of the trials, and to study the memoirs and diaries of the Nazi leaders that have recently been made available, only sharpens this impression of disproportion, and encourages the disorder of our sentiment.

For instance, in the light of his deeds it is hardly possible to think of the Nazi as pathetic; yet pathetic is the word that comes first to mind in reading the clumsy, coarsely written memoirs of Alfred Rosenberg, composed while awaiting trial in Nuremberg. (An English translation will soon be published in this country by Ziff-Davis.) The supreme ideologue of Nazism portrays himself for us as a superficial and simple-minded man, sincere in all his hypocrisies, a failure in Nazi politics, tearfully sentimental on his own account, an earnest philosophical quack. He had neither sufficient straightforward brutality nor sufficient political sense to secure a lasting position of authority in the Nazi movement. He was officially honored and respected as the author of the "Aryan bible," the bulky and unreadable *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, which sold over a million copies in Germany but which no one (including Hitler) read, and which was translated into only one foreign language—Japanese! Unofficially, he was despised by everyone (except Hitler—who thought him a loyal friend) and he had to sit fretfully and watch all the prerogatives of power snatched from his hands by Himmler, Bormann, and Goebbels.

Like Hitler, Rosenberg started out as a painter. But the artistic temperaments of the two men were of a different order. Hitler was a failure, a frustrated neurotic with a grudge against society. Rosenberg was, on his own level, quite successful; in a different era he would have been one of those banal painters of

landscapes, member of a community art club, instructor in a small mediocre school, idolized by the mayor's wife, a cultural lion at civic tea parties. But the Russian and German revolutions cut off the roots that promised such a flowering; and his "philosophical ideas" (really puffed-up versions of his own rather primitive esthetic doctrines) found a response in the hot-bed of intellectual charlatanism that was post-war Munich; instead of the crank notions of the village esthete (privately printed and distributed) they became the official "ideology" of a powerful nation.

IN 1934, when Rosenberg was the Nazi spokesman in the Reichstag and elsewhere for "the suffering Germans in all foreign lands," his first collection of speeches and essays was published under the title of *Blood and Honor*. His publisher noted in a preface: "Born on January 12, 1893 in Reval (Esthonia), Alfred Rosenberg, as a Baltic German, lived through the sorrow and suffering of the *Auslanddeutsche*, and then the Russian Revolution. In order to bring this suffering to the attention of all Germans, and in order to help guard against the Communist menace, he came to Germany at the end of 1917. . . ."

In his memoirs, Rosenberg gives a quite contrary picture. In the saccharine vocabulary of a slick-magazine, he recollects his "golden youth" when, as a "superior" German-speaking Balt he was able to combine day-dreams of the Teutonic Knights with all the practical ease and advantages of a middle-class household in a Russia where pan-Slavism was only beginning to gnaw at a long tradition of tolerance for the Baltic Germans. He attended the Reval *gymnasium* where he was a model student, and where he was chosen *Klassenprimus* not for his scholarly record but for the good effect it might have on some of the more wayward students. Of his attitude toward his teachers Rosenberg writes: "When I was later active in Germany, I was astonished at the always erupting hostility toward teachers. This was freely and crassly expressed by many of my [party] comrades. . . . Of my teachers in Reval, I can speak only with the greatest respect." He also makes a point of the fact that there were Russian and Esthonian students among the Germanic majority, without the slightest hint of hostility or conflict.

It was Rosenberg's first wife, Hilda, who opened the door of European culture to him. Interested in Russian art, music, and ballet,

she was the antithesis of the young, provincial *Baltdeutsch*. Under her influence he read Nietzsche (whose theatrical pathos disgusted him) and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* ("It made a very deep impression on me, and remains for me the great novel of European literature"). He continued his studies—architecture at the technical *Hochschule* in Riga—and his painting. When he was able to see a display of early canvases by Picasso and Matisse, his reaction was: "Very bright: white, blue, rose, with many interesting shades, smoothly and ably painted; on the whole, however, superficial and sensational. This path does not lead to great art."

The years of war and revolution were comparatively placid for Rosenberg. He went to Moscow, boarded with a Russian family, studied, went to hear music at the Savoy, and passed his evenings in the coffee-houses on the Tverskaya. He read Houston Stewart Chamberlain with gusto, but the Russian revolution on which he became Germany's expert, passed him by at the time. Returning to Reval, he volunteered for the German army but was turned down because Esthonia was occupied territory; nor could he get permission to go to Germany. With time on his hands, he entered a competition sponsored by a furniture company to design the interior decoration of a living room. His two sketches won two second prizes.

Finally, in November 1918, Rosenberg was permitted to enter Germany. On this event he pontificates in his memoirs: "So I came to the Reich, originally a man given to art, philosophy, and history, who had never thought of mixing in politics. But I had observed the present, which was to become history."

ROSENBERG'S development as a successful Nazi followed the familiar pattern. Foot-loose and penniless in turbulent Munich, he gravitated toward the kindred souls who populated the Munich beerhall cellars: the White Russians, ex-officers, crackpot economic theorists—all those who ultimately coagulated into the NSDAP. His high-flown theories, especially his anti-Semitic ones, met with approval, and he turned out to be an industrious and prolific publicist.

But the high rank that Rosenberg attained in the Nazi hierarchy turned out to be a hollow success. The real politicians among the Nazis considered him a useful adjunct, but by no means indispensable and often very much of a

nuisance. As early as 1925, Rosenberg whines, he could not get Hitler to take him along on his political tours. The founder and most renowned expositor of the theory of the master race was rudely shoved aside by political bosses who were ignorant of the essential polarity of Germanic and Greek art, and whose personal lives and financial dealings were not as impeccable as his, but who knew the business of party intrigue. As a result, Rosenberg adopted a protective ignorance, a careful "non-political" reaction to internal party happenings. (The fact that he was physically a coward was another motive.) Even while waiting for his trial at Nuremberg, he confessed ignorance as to what had really happened on the night of June 30, 1934 when Roehm and his cohorts were assassinated. His self-assumed ignorance was carried over to his job as Commissioner of Eastern Territories during the war: he left the liquidation of hundreds of thousands of Jews and Russians to his subordinates (appointed by the SS) who played the game of keeping him uninformed with a straight face. When conditions reached the point where it was impossible for him any longer to pretend, he protested to Hitler that the SS was overstepping its authority. Hitler soothed him, and the SS kept right on.

Rosenberg was no more swayed by humanitarian sympathies than the rest of his colleagues, and his criticism of the mass exterminations in the East was based partly on the grounds of political expediency (Goebbels shared his viewpoint on this matter), and partly on sheer exasperation at seeing all his powers successively appropriated; a bungler in every position that Hitler gave him, he was nonetheless anxious for political power. Brooding over his dispossession, he saw in it the corruption of Nazism from a high ideal to a coarse political dictatorship, in his own words, "the victory of sectarianism over the idea."

To Rosenberg, Goebbels was "a Mephistopheles." When Baldur von Schirach remarked that after all Goebbels was an artist too, Rosenberg retorted: "No, a *schmierant*." And in his memoirs, his vanity claimed its revenge on the brilliant and warped fanatic who usurped control of Nazi propaganda: "Hitler, of course, knew that I had a deeper understanding of art and culture than Goebbels, who was scarcely able to see beneath the surface." It is Goebbels whom Rosenberg blames for the anti-Jewish "excesses" and for having "linked art with propaganda." (!)

SIMILARLY, Heinrich Himmler was for Rosenberg the "Gray Eminence" of the Third Reich. (Himmler had been born into a clerically-minded family and had revolted against political Catholicism; this only caused Rosenberg to remark bitterly: "A man can leave the Roman church ten times and still remain a Jesuit.") At length Rosenberg castigates Himmler for having absorbed all cultural institutions into the SS, for having brought the SS troops, in their brave obedience, into un-Germanic and horrible ways, and for having surrounded Hitler with satellites who fed him distorted versions of the true picture. In this, Rosenberg writes, he was ably abetted by Martin Bormann, the "mystery man" of the Third Reich. After 1941, Bormann, as Hitler's secretary, was the second most powerful man in Germany, the leader, in Rosenberg's words, of "the antechamber dictatorship"; yet he received very little publicity, his photo hardly ever appeared, his activities were barely mentioned in the press. "Bormann never uttered or defended a single idea. He led no men. He was the pure bureaucrat."

Those who are familiar with the history of revolutions will already have drawn the parallels. Trotsky on Stalin, Danton on Robespierre—always the same plaint of a revolution betrayed by willfull and vicious men. But the French and Russian revolutions *were* predicated on an ideal, which was as genuine and widely felt as the degeneration that followed. Nazism had no ideal, only Rosenberg possessed one, the dupe of his own propaganda. And perhaps he didn't have one either; his revulsion can as well be interpreted as that of a cowardly man, rationalizing his resentment against those better fitted to rule in the Nazi machine. In any case, he has left us his word: "A great idea was misused by small men. . . . National Socialism was a European answer to a century's question. . . . National Socialism was finally misused and corrupted by men on whom its creator fatefully placed reliance."

But Rosenberg was too facile a philosopher to stop at mere disillusionment. The trouble with National Socialism, he came to realize in the last months of the war, was that it had "ideal" and "organization" but no "form." It is "form" that ensures the purity of "ideal" and "organization." He began to devise a scheme for a conservative republic that would prevent the emergence of a one-party dictatorship, and soon had turned out a volume on political theory, entitled *The Power of Form*.

The work was destroyed in manuscript—and those who have looked into the *Myth of the Twentieth Century* will have few regrets.

It was inevitable that one of the Nazi leaders would reduce the inflated doctrine of "Aryanism" to its intellectual absurdity and prosaic brutality. This was Heinrich Himmler's task. Indeed, he took it so seriously and with such bloody consequences that Trevor-Roper refers to him as "the Great Inquisitor" of Nazism. However, Nazism was the kind of movement, and Himmler the kind of man, that could produce only a parody of a "Great Inquisitor." Hitler himself ridiculed Himmler's extravagant ideological pretensions,* while Speer regarded him as "half schoolmaster, half crank," and Rosenberg was appalled by his rigid application of Nazi dogma.

In his book *European Witness* (Reynal and Hitchcock, 1946), Stephen Spender remarks of the German that he "could not relate his own personality with his actions done in the name of duty." It is this gap between personality and duty which may help explain the picked *Einsatzgruppen*—for the most part educated men: doctors, lawyers, civil servants—who in cold blood exterminated several million people in Eastern Europe. And it helps us explain Himmler, a small, bespectacled, and mild bureaucrat whom his subordinates called, without irony, "gentle Heinrich," and who was a conscienceless murderer.

During the war, Himmler gave a speech to SS generals and police officials on the subject of concentration camps which reveals the mentality of the man:

"It would be extremely instructive for everyone . . . to inspect such a concentration camp. Once they have seen it, they are convinced that no one has been sent there unjustly; that it is the offal of criminals and freaks. . . . On the whole, education consists of discipline, never of any kind of instruction on an ideological basis, for the prisoners have for the most part slave-like souls. . . . Discipline means order. The order begins with these people living in clean barracks. Such a thing can really only be accomplished by us Germans, hardly another nation would be as human as

we are. The laundry is frequently changed. The people are taught to wash themselves twice daily, and to use a toothbrush, a thing with which most of them have been unfamiliar."

It is almost incredible that Himmler actually believed all this. But he did believe it—and more. Himmler set the SS foreign intelligence section to studying Freemasonry and Rosicrucianism, the significance of the suppression of the harp in Ulster, and the inner meaning of Gothic spires and Eton top-hats. He was especially interested in runes (the still undeciphered script of the Norsemen), hoping to prove a link between the "Aryans" and the Japanese. On April 1, 1946—five weeks before the end of the war—he conceived of colonizing the Ukraine with a new religious sect thought up by his masseur.

In 1935, Himmler created the *Ahnenerbe*—the Academy of Ancestral Heritage—to propagate the truths of *SS Wissenschaft*. On one occasion during the war, when he was away at the front, he wrote the following letter (quoted by Goudsmit) to SS Colonel Sievers, head of the *Ahnenerbe*:

"In future weather researches, which we expect to carry out after the war by systematic organization of an immense number of single facts, I request you to take note of the following:

"The roots, or onions, of the meadow saffron are located at depths that vary from year to year. The deeper they are, the more severe the winter will be; the nearer they are to the surface, the milder the winter.

"This fact was called to my attention by the *Fuehrer*.

Heil Hitler!
Himmler"

It seems appropriate to point out here that Himmler was graduated from an agricultural academy.

Unfortunately, this buffoonery was not always so funny. Its logic led to the setting up of the "Applied War Research" department in the *Ahnenerbe* which was responsible for the grotesque and idiotic experiments on selected concentration camp inmates.

In the last months of the war, Himmler became concerned with his reputation as a butcher. He appointed a new Reich Commissioner for concentration camps, to reorganize them in a "humanistic spirit." He ordered an end to forced evacuation of the camps in the face of advancing Allied armies. Lest these acts

* Hitler's attitude to "Aryanism" was a practical one: "Were it even proven that in the past there had been no Aryan race, it is for us to insist that such should exist in the future! For men of action that is the deciding standpoint." (*Mein Kampf*)

be misunderstood, he spoke his mind to a Jewish Swedish representative on April 19, 1945: "They say that I am trying to forge an alibi. I need no alibi; I always did what seemed right for my people. It did not make me a rich man."

When Himmler heard that Hitler was doomed in Berlin, he decided that history had called him. In an interview with the Swedish Red Cross representative, Count Folke Bernadotte, he offered to surrender on the Western front and keep up the fight in the East until the Allies came to his assistance. As Bernadotte left, carrying these terms with him, Himmler began to worry whether he should shake hands or bow when he met Eisenhower. He drew up a new cabinet and chose a new name for his party. On May 5th, Himmler held his last staff conference in Flensburg; he had plans to set up a provisional government in Schleswig-Holstein. His one remaining problem, he said, was that he needed an interview with General Montgomery. When he was finally captured by the British, the shock of being treated like a criminal was too great, and he took poison.

UNLIKE Rosenberg and Himmler, Joseph Goebbels was not interested in any version of the Aryan myth. He was, on the other hand, very much interested in political myths as elaborated by Georges Sorel and Vilfred Pareto. The political myth was the form by which he molded the body politic to suit his "creative vision." Goebbels is on record as having said of Dostoevsky: "He writes because writing is still in the 19th century one of the possible modes of existence. The political solution was as yet unborn." Like so many Nazi leaders, Goebbels had tried to be an artist and (like them) had failed. He then set out to seek a "higher" artistry in politics.

In a suggestive chapter of his book, Stephen Spender discusses in detail Goebbels' novel *Michael*, published in 1929 when Goebbels was already on the road to his "political solution":

"Very little happens in *Michael*. The hero is a young student, his mind full of memories of 1918, who is supposed to be studying at Heidelberg . . . He has love affairs and friendships. His relationship with people on whom he fastens his attention has two aspects. One is that others should believe in his own 'demon,' his genius. The other is that they are

his opponents. These two passionate impulses, together with his passionate nationalism, and a perpetual restless desire to transcend the narrow boundaries of his existence in postwar Germany on the wave of some tremendous emotion, leave him no room to be interested in human beings as human beings, and no room for self-criticism. Yet he has a great faith in himself, and if one asks how such a person can have such a faith, the answer is that the experience of constant turmoil gives him a convincing sense of the reality of his own existence, and it is this which he above all demands from life: to suffer, to be mad, to experience a sense of ecstasy."

Goebbels as a rebel was an esthetic rebel, not against any specific iniquities of postwar Germany, but against life and society that conditions and limits the individual (especially the ugly, club-footed individual that was Goebbels); he was as pure an embodiment of Nietzscheanism as could be contrived. And just as Nietzscheanism had strong affinities with the *fin de siècle* esthetic revolt against bourgeois society, so Goebbels seems to be in some sort of relationship with contemporary artists who revolt in disgust against their epoch and the people who inhabit it. There is, however, a decisive difference between Goebbels and such artists. Goebbels took to a "political" solution (as Nietzsche did not); after all to call a century a pigsty is one thing, to make it into a pigsty is another.

When Goebbels has his hero say: "Today we are all expressionists—men who want to make the world outside themselves take the form of their life within themselves," he expresses both his verbal affinity with the artist and his actual distance from him. For by the "world outside," the artist means the world of accomplished imagination, of paper and ink, bounded by the covers of a book: in creating this world, no matter how ugly, the artist may extend our understanding of human nature and possibilities. Goebbels, however, had in mind the world that bleeds—and a drop of blood is incommensurate with a bucketful of imagination.

Michael is full of the kind of ecstatic visions one might expect:

"I tear my heart out. What does a heart matter? I throw it into the storm of fire.

"I am a hero, a God, a Savior.

"I myself bleed. My arms hang down powerless.

"I have been hit.

"I become tired. I sink down.

"I lose consciousness."

BY THE time we meet Goebbels in his diaries, he has had considerable success in his "creative politics." He had, in the course of years, transformed Nazism from the ideological effervescence of a beer-hall into a working-class, "socialistic," anti-plutocratic movement that had swept the industrial Rhineland; he had created the *Fuehrer* myth; he had organized Berlin into a Nazi stronghold; he had built the most effective propaganda machine the world had seen up to that time; he was one of the most powerful—and by far the most intelligent—of the rulers of Germany. The days of *Sturm und Drang* were a dim memory, replaced by factional scheming, managing a country at war, trying to produce a baby a year (his total was five, all given names beginning with H), and the innumerable other obligations of Nazi power.

Those who look into *The Goebbels Diaries* (Doubleday, 1948) should know that what they are reading, though certainly written by Goebbels, is not a diary in the sense of something written in complete confidence and intimacy. That Goebbels kept a diary we know from many sources, aside from the inherent improbability of such a supreme egoist not taking advantage of the position history had accorded him. One of his subordinates, Rudolf Semmler, noted in his private diary: "For twenty years Goebbels has regularly and painstakingly kept a diary. Every day he spends an hour on this task. So far he has written twenty-three thick volumes in minute handwriting. Goebbels believes that one day this diary, read with the official archives, will provide one of the richest sources for the history of the Nazi party and Hitler's years of power."

Should these diaries ever turn up, there is no doubt that Goebbels' opinion would be vindicated. But these are not the diaries that make up the volume recently published. *The Goebbels Diaries* are excerpted from a type-written manuscript of some seven hundred and fifty thousand words, covering nine and one-half months of the years 1942-43. They were obviously dictated to a professional typist—the lines were triple spaced and the margins wide—at a tremendous speed; one day's dictation went up to eighty-five typed pages! It is likely that they are a preliminary self-edited version

of Goebbels' record which he was preparing to serve Germany and the world after Nazism's triumph; the various "indiscretions" that can be found would have been eventually eliminated to make up a document in conformity with the Nazi ideal, in such matters, of unmitigated dullness.

This helps explain why the *Diaries* are so exasperating and amorphous. They are neither an "inside story" of the Nazi regime nor of the Nazi mind; they provide only a few additional footnotes on well-worn themes.

The *Diaries* pay their respects to those anti-Nazis abroad who urged (unsuccessfully) that Allied propaganda seek to distinguish between the Nazis and the German people. For Lord Vansittart, Goebbels' discussion of the "anti-Hun" enthusiasm that he made fashionable among otherwise civilized intellectuals is sure to be unpleasant reading. At one point, Goebbels suggests the erection of a monument in Vansittart's honor, inscribed: "To the Englishman who rendered the greatest service to the German cause during the war." In another entry, he writes: "A much more clever form of propaganda against the Reich has been proposed in the United States. The idea is not to go against the German people but against Nazism. I sense a certain danger. . . . I gave orders that the German press is not to publish or discuss turns of speech such as are being used increasingly in the American press."

That Goebbels was a pathological anti-Semite of the kind visible on the "lunatic fringe" of American politics is common knowledge, and the *Diaries* offer nothing to modify this notion. Nothing, that is, except a flashing, occasional—but groundless—doubt as to the ingenuousness of his opinions. When he writes indignantly: "They [the Jews] are now trying to stir up the entire world merely to incite public opinion against the National Socialist Reich and its anti-Semitic convictions," it would seem to have more the ring of hypocrisy than of pathology. Similarly, on May 11, 1942 he was moved to the following complaint: "There are still 40,000 Jews in Berlin and despite the heavy blows dealt them they are still insolent and aggressive"; the Jews referred to were half-Jews or Jewish women married to Christians, and they were all, with justification, in a state of near-death from fright. But there was no propagandistic point to be made by these fantastic statements. There is no explanation for them at all, except that Goebbels believed them; and the fact that he

did believe them sets the stamp of authenticity upon his Nazism.

Goebbels is generally accounted as a "left-wing" Nazi, and if we keep in mind one qualification—that Goebbels would never allow a mere idea to stand between himself and an accretion of power—the label is correct. Goebbels' great contribution to Nazism had been to make it understandable and appealing to the urban working-class, and he personally held the military caste and the bourgeoisie in great contempt. In his diary we read: "Our prognosis regarding this war is surely right. It is being conducted by the capitalists of all countries against the German social commonwealth."

From the beginning, Goebbels demanded a "total war" which would concentrate all powers in the hands of a few Nazi rulers (including himself), and which would provide the opportunity for the annihilation of remnants of the old regime. As the end of the war drew close, when what he said could not possibly matter and when Hitler was sulking in his dugout, Goebbels had his day. Taking charge of Radio Berlin, he gave free vent to his radicalism, which turned out to be a radical nihilism. He created the specter of the Werewolves who would continue the fight for all time and under all conditions—at a moment when the leader of the Werewolves was negotiating a surrender to the British through the Danish underground movement.

He exulted at what Nazism had wrought: "Under the debris of our shattered cities, the last so-called achievements of the middle-class nineteenth century have been finally buried. . . . Together with the monuments of culture there crumble also the last obstacles to the fulfillment of our revolutionary task. Now that everything is in ruins we are forced to rebuild Europe. In the past, private possessions held us to bourgeois restraint. Now the bombs, instead of killing all Europeans, have only smashed the prison walls which held them captive."

No one paid any attention to these apocalyptic rantings, especially the Germans. But they inflated Goebbels' vanity and conscience (which, for him, were much the same thing) to a climax of dedication that saw him, alone among the top Nazis, remain loyal to his oath to die with Hitler, kill his wife and five children, and then commit suicide before he could be taken prisoner.

EVEN a casual glance over the members of the Nazi leadership corps will ascertain that it held no "well-balanced" individuals; in all of them there was an obvious psychic imbalance, an exaggeration of certain faculties and the atrophy of others, that was revealed in uncontrollable emotional drives, and a deteriorated sense of reality. It would seem from this that psychiatry is one discipline that might be appealed to in order to reach a true understanding of Nazism, and that the psychiatrist might be more helpful than the historian or the economist. But it does not turn out quite that way. Psychiatrists do find important things to say about the Nazi personality—but these point, not to the uniqueness of the Nazis, but to their psychological continuity with all of us who are not Nazis. We end up by knowing more about ourselves and about our potentialities for debasement, but little more about the Nazis.

This is the implicit point of *The Case of Rudolf Hess* (Norton, 1948), a report by the eight British and American psychiatrists who were in charge of Hess during his five-years imprisonment. It is a sober and unsensational work, in no way related to the wild incursions that psychiatrists so often make into politics and history. Dr. J. R. Rees, who edited the volume, does append a chapter in which he tries to probe into the specific German social background that produced Nazis; it is more scrupulous than the run of such attempts, though probably not less misleading.

Merely to look at the photograph of Hess on the dust cover gives rise to the belief that here at last we have the "real" Nazi; his heavy, beetled eyebrows, square jaw, and thin lips invoke images of cruelty and fanaticism. Just as Goebbels was the "public-relations" man and Goering the "military man," so Hess was the "party man" of Nazism. It is easy to imagine him as Professor Karl Haushofer's favorite student, studying geopolitics with passionate subjectivity; as leader of the SS, his every sinew taut with dogma; as Hitler's deputy, strutting across the platform at party ceremonies, his right arm forever stiffly upraised without apparent weariness.

Actually, however, by the time Hess flew to England, he had already lost his pre-eminent position in the Nazi movement. His colleagues regarded him as a "crackpot," and the SS came under the control of Himmler. It was only his past service and his loyalty to Hitler that kept

Hess among the leadership, if only in appearance. He was given hard-luck cases to "fix" and uplifting speeches to make to biologically fertile mothers.

Hess's sudden flight to England demonstrated that his fellow Nazis had not misjudged him. The purpose of this flight was exactly what Hess claimed it to be: he was shocked by the bombing of British women and children and was appalled by the prospect of a long and bloody war. His knowledge of British politics was a bundle of inaccurate clichés, and he was convinced that if he could pierce the curtain that Churchill had established around the King and his "court," he could persuade these latter to come to terms. That the third-ranking Nazi (on paper, anyway) should be so misinformed about the workings of the British government was in itself surprising. But a little probing by psychiatrists broke through the hard, stereotyped Nazi shell to the festering pulp beneath, and brought home to them the fact that they had a real "case" on their hands. Hess's pockets, when he parachuted into Scotland, bulged with homeopathic cures and quack medicines. He exhibited all the textbook neurotic symptoms: compulsive orderliness, tense secretiveness about his bowel movements, a fear of being passively conveyed in vehicles. He was an acute hypochondriac, a believer in "nature cures," and the victim of an immense persecution complex.

This persecution complex was at the basis of his anti-Semitism, which was really of classic dimensions. All during his imprisonment he complained of food poisoning, of being disturbed by strange noises at night, of torture at the hands of dentists and eye doctors. This he knew to be part of a world Jewish plot, whose power was due to the secret workings of "post-hypnotic suggestion" through which all the world's non-Jews were driven to self-destruction. When his attempted suicide (while in England) failed, he blamed the Jews for having incited him to the attempt because he had found out about their secret power of hypnosis. This Judaic post-hypnotic suggestion was produced by a secret chemical that was inserted into the world's food, and its consequences were manifold and subtle. Wrote Hess in his diary: "I could not foresee at this time that the Jews, in order to receive material for propaganda against Germany, would go so far as to bring the guards of German concentration camps, by use of the

secret chemical, to treat the inmates as the OGPU did." Nor was this the limit of Jewish subtlety; Hess found occasion to complain that the Jews went so far as to put a poison into his food that actually made him feel better.

Hess's notorious amnesia, which at Nuremberg he claimed to have faked, was beyond doubt genuine, at least for the major portion of his imprisonment. It is catalogued by the psychiatrists as "hysterical amnesia"—a self-protective device against the impingement of the unpleasantness of the real world. Here are two summaries of Hess's psychic state:

"The paranoid features of his personality were clearly seen in egocentricity, based on a deep feeling of insecurity, a fear of being injured and attacked. The psychological interpretation of such an attitude is that the patient has severe uncertainty and conflict about his own value and acceptance by society. He clearly has no great confidence in the goodness of other people, and while withdrawing in one sense into his 'self' he is always looking for an idealized person outside himself whom he might love and trust in order to assuage his loneliness." (Dr. Henry V. Dicks).

And: "The findings . . . indicate that Hess suffers from a true psycho-neurosis, primarily of the hysterical type which is grafted upon a basic paranoid personality. In other words, fundamentally Rudolf Hess is an introverted, shy, withdrawn, personality, who basically is suspicious of his environment and projects upon his surroundings concepts developing within himself" (Major Douglas Kelley).

It is something of a shock to a layman, after reading this case history, to find out that these psychiatrists did not at all consider Hess clinically insane or committable to an asylum. And it drives home the point that is suggested by the above two quotations: that Hess's psychic processes were not different in kind from those which might be discovered among French barbers, mid-Western university professors, or composers of letters-from-the-lovelorn in all lands. His unconscious faithfully adhered to the rules of the universal human unconscious, and we see that we are not entirely strangers to the twistings of his mind. If a list of his symptoms were clipped out and passed around as anonymous samples, they would arouse no special curiosity, so charac-

teristic are they of what we have come to expect psychiatrists to dig up.

But where then does the Nazi come from? Dr. Rees, in his concluding chapter, attempts an answer. In effect what he says is that just these trite psychological derangements, when present in large numbers of people and spurred on by social and political institutions, make up Nazism. He writes: "The Nazi movement would seem to have been but a late and, as it were, caricatured expression of modes of behavior and aspiration which had been noted about the attitudes of the German elite long before the war of 1914-18. The outstanding among these were tendencies to exert power and domination, to have status and 'honor' . . . and a tendency to glorify mass movement as an expression of unity in subordination to a great leader figure." The patriarchal structure of the German family encouraged the growth of authoritarianism, at the same time that it left a potent residue of inferiority and resentment that sought outlet in a "scapegoat" complex.

This type of analysis is not exactly new—nor does it improve with age. Of course, German social history is extremely pertinent to the present, as is all history. But it is the specifics of pertinence that have to be isolated and demonstrated. That the German family was patriarchal at all is a moot point (there are sharp differences between Catholic and Protestant families as well as regional differences). And there were many Germans who were very sensitive with regard to status and honor, who enjoyed speaking of "fatherland," "duty," and "hard work" who never became Nazis. Indeed most of the conspirators against

the Nazis were people of this kind (Goerdeler, Beck, Canaris, Gisevius, etc.), as are the members of the Social-Democratic, Communist, and Catholic center parties in that country today.

It is true that we cannot understand the present without understanding the past; but it does not follow that if we understand the past—or if we think we understand it—the present can be measured as a passive resultant. This sort of error—the "genetic fallacy"—is one that psychiatrists seem prone to commit by the very nature of their method, which works backwards. A complete and detailed case history of Rudolf Hess would tell us much about him—but it would not tell us the full meaning of his becoming a Nazi. For intervening in the working out of his complexes there would be the act of moral choice; it is this act that makes of Hess a Nazi rather than, say, a "shy, withdrawn" librarian suspiciously guarding the books of some provincial library. Or, instead of a moral choice, a moral convulsion of the personality that set the line upon which Rudolf Hess walked through life while that distressed subconscious of his worked away in its "shy, withdrawn" depths.

The Nazis are human: that is what the psychiatrists tell us. We always knew that, though it does no harm to have it confirmed.

But the Nazis are also non-human: that is what we, their wounded fellow-creatures, have to tell the psychiatrists and ourselves, as we point to the incredible horrors they so calmly worked on the body and soul of mankind. And it this very combination of the only-too-human and unimaginably-inhuman that makes the Nazis a persistent and nettling mystery for us.

LETTERS FROM READERS

The Potential of Democratic Socialism

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Mangan's interesting article on the future of the European middle class (in COMMENTARY'S August issue) has occasioned some surprise among readers here in England, where we are under the impression that the Labor government rests upon working-class support and is carrying out socialist measures, however limited in scope, which go considerably beyond "the Western European liberal-radical tradition."

It may be that, as Mr. Mangan says, "Social Democracy has no longer very much to do with socialism"; but this belief has not yet gained ground among the Tories and their middle-class supporters who are aware that their share of the national income, and their influence upon the direction of the national economy, have contracted sharply in recent years. It is one thing to assert that the Labor government is creating fresh problems by building a half-way structure, and is not as yet showing much creative energy in dealing with these new problems (e.g. direction of labor under full employment, town planning on a national scale, etc.)

It is quite another thing and, I would suggest, evidence of a somewhat sectarian cast of mind, to dismiss all this with a brief reference to "reformism." One of the major differences between the pre-war and postwar situation, so far as the labor movement is concerned, lies precisely in the termination of the old sterile controversy between the "revolutionary" and the "reformist" schools, and the realization that profound structural changes *can and must* be introduced by democratic methods, if they are not to lead to horrible perversions. It would appear indeed that in France the "*réformes de structure*" have not gone far enough, and are now being partially reversed, but is that a reason for returning to the political terminology of the inter-war years? Mr. Mangan's condescending reference to socialist "Centrism," and his evocation of the 1917-23 period, prompts the inquiry whether our sectarian leftist friends will ever wake up

to the existence of a democratic labor movement.

Lack of space prevents me from going beyond brief mention of three outstanding points of disagreement. In the first place, Mr. Mangan shows a quite un-Marxian tendency to equate the bourgeoisie with the intelligentsia. Most of the typical individuals he cites do not represent any particular strain of middle class opinion, but rather different modes of approach among intellectuals towards the problems of the present day. Secondly, he gratuitously ignores the distinction between the "old" middle class of small entrepreneurs, rentiers, shopkeepers, etc., and the "new" stratum of "managers," technicians, civil servants, career intellectuals, etc., whose way of life is perfectly compatible with socialism and in fact compels a socialist solution of some of the most important modern problems, including that of the modern family. Thirdly, he says nothing about the role of the state in its most obvious aspect, that of daily administration. There are socialists who believe that what is holding back political progress in France and Italy is quite simply the weakness of the state as such, that is to say, its incapacity to administer social controls. He mentions the wine scandals which helped to discredit the Gouin government, but fails to point out that de Gaulle's real strength lies in his perception of the fact that while a country can for a while be governed without a legislature it cannot be administered without an executive. France's immediate task is to build up a civil service and a machinery of planning which can be trusted to work, and the same is true of Italy: those Italian socialists who cooperate with de Gasperi do so (as they are careful to explain in private) because they know that it is not the slightest use "socializing" anything in a country where a state cannot even collect taxes in a reasonably efficient way.

The alternative to democratic methods and administrative honesty—both available in north-Western Europe, but for some reason not in all of Western Europe—is the rule of "special tribunals" with powers to impose ferocious penalties—in other words, the kind of apparatus extemporized by the Bolsheviks during the

"heroic period" of 1917-23, to which we are invited to return. What has all this got to do with the disintegration of the middle class? Very little, I believe. The facts cited by Mr. Mangan are not in dispute. Where, in my opinion, he goes wrong is in his failure to perceive that France's real problem is to become a *modern* country, i.e. a country in which democratic socialism can be expected to *work*.

GEORGE LICHTHEIM

London, England

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Though I find myself in agreement with much of Sherry Mangan's "Is Europe's Middle Class Finished?" (COMMENTARY, August 1948), I wish to protest one remark in it. Mangan speaks of "the road [along] which the French Rassemblement Democratique Revolutionnaire . . . seems to be well advanced, of completely retreating from politics." Unless he has some new and startling information, this remark is malicious. Most COMMENTARY readers are not likely to know that the RDR is a loose coalition of French left-wing, anti-Stalinist groups: the Left Socialists, the Socialist youth, the unorthodox Trotskyists, the *Revue Internationale* group, some Christian Socialists, and some leaders of the Existentialists. Its political program is, roughly, the attempt to build a third socialist front in opposition to both powers, East and West.

Mangan's description can therefore hardly seem fair or accurate. Or does he, perhaps mean that the RDR has "retreated" from his politics?

Perhaps his reference to the RDR can be understood more readily when one knows that he still clings to the notion that Russia is a "degenerated" workers state to be defended from "attack." The RDR has, happily, rejected this absurdity, which may explain why it incurred his wrath. Knowledge of Mangan's own views may also explain why his article, while eloquent enough in denouncing Stalinism, says nothing about the role of the Russian state in European politics. And that is understandable: for the partisans of the notion that Russia remains a "workers state" a discussion of its recent political behavior poses some rather embarrassing problems.

IRVING HOWE

Princeton, New Jersey

German Anti-Semitism Today

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. J. Glenn Gray, in his letter in the July COMMENTARY on my article "Our New German Policy and the DP's," accuses me of lack

of objectivity. I believe I can demonstrate that the lack of objectivity is his.

He hangs his case on the "conclusion to be drawn from reading the article—that all Germans have a bestial hatred of Jews." I have carefully reread my article and nowhere find that emotion attributed to *all* the Germans. In a brief review of national attitudes, a writer is circumscribed by the practical necessity to give top priority to analysis of *dominant* tendencies. In that case, the discerning reader would not infer that there are no other tendencies whatsoever.

As evidence of endemic, predominant anti-Semitic tendencies in the great majority of the German population my article cited these two facts:

1. The report of Dr. Philipp Auerbach, Bavarian State Commissioner for Victims of Political and Racial Persecution, detailed hundreds of mass manifestations of violent anti-Semitism.

2. A US Military Government public-opinion poll found that 61 per cent of the German population admitted anti-Semitic predispositions. A more elaborate report, completed in 1947, revealed that less than two Germans out of ten can be relied upon to resist overt actions against the Jews. Taking into consideration the well known phenomenon of "concealment of guilt," it is a conservative estimate that more than 80 per cent of the adult Germans are still unreconstructed anti-Semites.

After the completion of my article there appeared a report of the International Committee of European Studies (Lord Vansittart, Edouard Herriot), the studies of Richard Hanser and Miles Bouton in the *American Mercury*, and others. The conclusions of these studies were even more drastic than mine.

The US Military Government published a report recently (*New York Times*, July 13) that 76 per cent of the State Prosecutors and 60 per cent of the judges in Bavaria were members of the Nazi Party. The Bavarian government has announced the appointment of four former Nazis to the newly organized Supreme Court of Bavaria. The Ministry of Justice has announced the promotion of a former Nazi to the position of the Chief Prosecutor in Wuerzburg. The return of former Nazis to economic and political positions has reached a point where legislation has had to be introduced to protect the non-Nazis.

In the face of these indisputable facts, Mr. Gray denies that "such feelings are, or were, common to the whole population or even to a majority." Here are the facts he offers in rebuttal:

1. "I know personally several (Jews in Military Government) who have won considerable affection among the German population." I may be mistaken, but I think I detect a variation of the "some of my best friends . . ." theme in this piece of anecdotal evidence.

2. "The number of Jewish service men who have applied for permission to marry German girls . . ." The manner in which this statement is made would lead one to infer thousands of such cases. To the best of my knowledge the term "isolated few" would be more accurate. In any case, what this proves beyond the fact that some German girls are smarter than some Jewish boys, escapes me.

3. "Every defendant Nazi can produce at least one letter from a Jewish refugee testifying that the Nazi has proved a friend in need during the persecution." The *reductio ad absurdum*, therefore, would be that all Nazis befriended Jews and that the murder of six million Jews was carried out by some enigmatic celestial bodies.

And last but not least: I wrote in my article that the culprits and war criminals were neither reported by the German population nor identified by the German authorities. Mr. Gray cannot really refute this by mentioning the fact that American authorities searched out the war criminals.

I leave the reader to weigh the evidence on the prevalence of anti-Semitism among the Germans.

But Mr. Gray has also taken exception to my "bitterness" in attributing a "bestial" quality to German hatred of Jews.

There is a little German town, Kleinmachnow, in the Soviet zone near Berlin. Some time ago the mayor of the city and the chief of the food office were in a local cafe with two friends, one a former SS man and the other a former Nazi party member. At a nearby table was a Jewish DP named Misha Czucker. The two officials began blurting out anti-Semitic abuse and finally threw Czucker out of the cafe. Czucker preferred charges but the German court acquitted the officials on a legal technicality. A few weeks later Czucker's headless body was found in a forest.

Perhaps "bestial" is not the appropriate adjective. Maybe somewhere in the lexicon of the human tongues there is a more apt word to do justice to a hatred that could burn to ash, bury alive, and tear asunder six million children, women, and men. . . . If a more suitable word were found, I would be prompt in replacing the criticized adjective.

SAMUEL GRINGAUZ

New York City

Why Americans Feel Insecure

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

With regard to the article by Arnold W. Green on "Why Americans Feel Insecure," in the July issue, we must agree that the Jew is not alone in being rootless and "alienated" in the modern world and that we are all more or less in the same situation. But the reasons put forward by Mr. Green as to why this is so seem to me neither quite realistic nor accurate historically. Take for example his statement that the basic family tradition preserved in the West down to recent decades was "patriarchal, rural-familistic," and one with which "the person lived out his life, rooted to the land and to a way of life that encompassed all his activities." Though it is true that we have now become a predominantly urban rather than rural dwelling population, it is hardly true to say that the people of America, except for a few areas in the South perhaps and to some less degree in New England, were ever "rooted to the soil." Insofar as we are a nation of peasants, it is of up-rooted peasants. In the early 19th century, as described by Carl Russell Fish in *The Rise of the Common Man*, for example, we see the beginnings not only of the great waves of immigration but also of the tendency of the native born to shift their homes from one part of America to another. Under these conditions the "intimate association among a small group of life-long relatives and friends" was perhaps not much more common than it is today.

By 1830, instead of folk enjoying the "slow, stable rhythm of family life on the farm," most visitors to America saw us as a nation of hustlers and bustlers, stark individualists out for their own profit, with sentimental attachments to the ideas of liberty and justice for all but with very low ethical standards in actual practice. It is true that family life as a whole was more stable then than now. De Tocqueville pays a tribute to the American family and to the extent to which "natural ties" of affection rather than "social ties" of tradition and property kept it together. But the point I should like to make is that the individual striving for material success is not a new thing in American life. This, and romantic love, less vulgarized than at present and more closely bound to the conception of monogamous marriages, have long been outstanding features of American life. If the average American now begins to feel lost, it is not because these tendencies have developed but simply that they are now much less practical ideals than formerly. The decrease of

optimism in the growing realization that our wonderfully expansive economy is coming to a close has been powerfully intensified by the advent of the atomic bomb, which has destroyed our former profound sense of security and shaken our great faith in material progress. The great increases in divorces has shaken the faith in romantic love as the fundamental basis for family life.

If the Protestant American is at the moment in a worse mental condition than the Jew, it is, it seems, because having enjoyed a much more secure position, he has had farther to fall. The Jew is at home in the urban secularized world. He has been nurtured in the conception that life is a struggle, and in that sense he is certainly more at home in the world today than the ordinary American. Insofar as he has cherished the tradition that intellectual and moral rather than material power are the solution of the world's problems, he is better rooted in reality than those whose faith has been founded on the values of a purely acquisitive society. Yet it must be conceded that the real disabilities which the Jew still suffers, added to the insecurities which we all suffer as inhabitants of the world, do put an extra burden upon him.

MARGARET PARK REDFIELD

Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I am grateful to Arnold W. Green for his excellent analysis of the psycho-social stresses at work in America today ("Why Americans Feel Insecure," July 1948). However in his remarks on where Jews fit into the picture, he missed at least one important point: namely, that Judaism is essentially a group and family religion, and forces that tend to atomize the family hit Judaism particularly hard.

One can be a good Christian in a monastery or even in a hermit's cave, but can you preside at a Passover *seder* without a wife to prepare the meal or a small son to ask the questions? The Church, with its emphasis on personal salvation, opens its doors daily to the troubled soul who comes alone to pray or to light a candle. But the landmarks of Judaism—the Passover, the *sukkoth*, the Sabbath *kiddush*, the dietary laws—are built inextricably into family situations.

The New Testament speaks of turning sons against fathers, thereby declaring the Gospel's ability to live with the family or without it.

The evangelist exhorts individual sinners or groups of individual sinners. But Judaism—since the extinction of the Essenes—has made no corresponding provision for atomism; the Jew must have a *minyan* even to confess his sins.

A young Christian who goes to a strange city in search of a job *may* even turn to his ancestral faith as a family substitute. But the Jew who leaves home must put his religion into mothballs and go forth naked. You can have a family without Judaism, but Judaism without a family is as absurd a proposition as the grin without the Cheshire cat.

Thus there are reasons why the forces Mr. Green describes may make a special target of organized Judaism.

Secondly, Mr. Green's suggestion that Jews have had more time than Protestants to get used to urban situations requires some qualification. The East European grandfather of the average American Jew lived not in a metropolis but in a small town or village whose culture was dominated by the surrounding rural population. His trade or business was usually a family business; the grocery manned by an entire family, all of whom live upstairs or in the rear, may still be found in America's older Jewish neighborhoods. . . .

MYRON KAUFMANN

Baltimore, Maryland

On Commentary

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have read your magazine with great interest. I was especially pleased to find among your authors Professor Karl Jaspers, who has been a close friend of mine for many years. During the period of the most terrible persecution of the Jews, Mrs. Jaspers hid herself from the Gestapo in my home.

I am particularly grateful to COMMENTARY for providing me with an insight into the spirit of American and world Jewry.

EMIL HENK

Heidelberg, Germany

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have been a great admirer of your magazine for some time and desire to have copies come to my office for myself and others to enjoy.

MAX R. GROSSMAN

Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The "Anti-Fascist" Novel

THE CONDEMNED. By JO PAGANO. New York, Prentice Hall, 1947. 215 pp. \$2.75.

SENECA, U.S.A. By JOHN ROEBURT. New York, Curl, 1947. 255 pp. \$2.50.

FLOOD CREST. By HODDING CARTER. New York, Rinehart, 1947. 278 pp. \$2.75.

SECOND GROWTH. By WALLACE STEGNER. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1947. 240 pp. \$2.75.

AMERICAN STORY. By ALLEN TAFT. New York, Arco, 1947. 240 pp. \$2.75.

Reviewed by IRVING HOWE

IN THESE five "tolerance" novels we find a pure and thereby especially revealing fictional portrait of the liberal anti-fascist world that so many Americans accept as their natural habitat. Since all of them range from the bad to the outright ludicrous and are commercial failures as well, we may consider them as neither art works nor commodities but merely as social evidence.

What strikes one most sharply while reading these novels is how rigidly hierarchical and compartmentalized are their versions of the human situation. By comparison, the proletarian novel dealt with complex personalities and fluid situations, and even the trashy popular adventure tales, science fiction, and drug-store romances seem internally free and dynamic.

Only in the "tough guy" novels of such writers as James M. Cain does one find every aspect of the writing so tightly—and disastrously—dominated: the writer's imagination never being freed to create a structure of its own, to take a trial flight into unpredicted possibilities. In both the "tolerance" and

"tough guy" novels there is an appalling flattening out and stratification of human character. Expression of feeling is reduced to the level of a repressed grunt, and the English language to the catatonic poverty of semi-literacy. We find here the imprints of a major development in both modern life and writing: the disintegration of human personality and its replacement by automata of obedience and function. Here there are neither characters nor situations, only events; the human being, once assumed to be a psychological entity, is shredded into a series of prefabricated traits.

IN THE beginning was the Common Man . . . the Ideal Cipher . . . in whose image we, the little people, are molded. Our lives are not very pleasant at the moment because, while all we want is simple decency, we are, alas, always being seduced. In fact, for us life is a perpetual Munich where our will is invariably frustrated by the unseen manipulations of . . . of whom, come to think of it? We are not quite sure. For we live in a very blurred world, where all ideas are as vague as Norman Corwin's prose and as pasty as Frank Craven's voice.

Yet everything would be quite all right if it were not for "the forces" (of evil or monopoly, but usually of greed). Sometimes "the forces" are represented by a reactionary newspaper publisher or a demagogic senator, but it seems quite clear that in these novels they are merely delegates of nameless groups that manipulate and ruin our lives for reasons no one can quite discover. (Perhaps "the forces" are no more than a projection of the anti-fascist mind itself, not even a symbol for an objective situation; perhaps in their very lurking indefiniteness they are but a projection of the liberal's sense of helplessness and floundering guilt before modern experience.)

In this rigid juxtaposition of the people and "the forces," we are feminine and they masculine. Always at their disposal, we are constantly violated by them. Sometimes they

have definite characteristics, being aggressive, active or violent, but we, the putty-headed sods, are merely clusters of *klein burgerlich* virtue with no more individuality than a pack of herrings.

Yet though we are so ritualistically marked off as victims, salvation is not really beyond our reach. All we need do to attain it is—not to think or suffer or even organize, but merely to cease being indifferent. We need but respond to the proper slogans and paradise is ours, for paradise is neither inaccessible nor distant: it is merely neglected. How easy then is our redemption if all that is necessary to save our souls is that we become hygienic progressives who read the *Star* daily, send frequent postcards to our congressman, buy our groceries according to the recommendations of the Consumers Union, and curl up on Friday afternoons with the *New Republic*.

Do we need to think or learn to think? Do we need to scrape the crusts of convention off our sensibility, enrich our awareness of the nuances of human feelings, subject ourselves to the disciplines of intellectual work? We can forego such painful exercises, for all the "tolerance" novel demands of us is conventional conscience, i.e., the properly cheerful response to its rhetoric.

Thought becomes downright dangerous, for it always involves the possibility of unpleasant and perplexing disagreements. And that the "tolerance" novel will not tolerate, for its monistic pattern requires that it end with a vague incantation to progress and unity, the two phrases that have replaced patriotism in the vocabulary of stupidity.

The vision of the good life implied by the "tolerance" novel might then be seen as a sort of benign totalitarianism—paradise bureaucratized. It demands that you be good, that is, behave like an obedient case history in the hands of a liberal social worker; properly adjusted, with a propensity towards cheerfulness; and eager to cooperate with other cheerful ciphers. Individual rebelliousness and idiosyncrasies are frowned upon, for in the tyranny of adjustment promised by these novels it is better to be "normal" than wise.

In such a world, naturally, there is no room for tragedy. We cannot stop to see what is really happening inside the human being when we are not interested in him—when, in fact, human beings as traditionally understood no longer exist. We are in-

terested only in progressive rhetoric, those verbal apparitions with well-brushed teeth. Once indifference has been overcome, all is cheerfulness—it had better be. In such an antiseptic and deodorized world (one has a vision of an endless hospital painted spotless white, full of gauze, and smelling of carbolic acid) is there any possibility of dissidence, defeat, individuality, ambivalence . . . tragedy?

Even when it is not contaminated by Stalinism, the progressivist anti-fascist mind is one of the bleakest, least cultivated products of our machine civilization; proof, as David Daiches remarks in a recent book, that semi-literacy is worse than both literacy and illiteracy. Nothing so thoroughly testifies to the obsolescence of conventional political liberalism in this country as its inability to generate a lively and viable imaginative literature. And in this very bleakness and lack of cultivation we can find one reason for the ease with which the progressivist anti-fascist succumbs to Stalinism. For it is not too long a step from conformist anti-fascism to Stalinist totalitarianism—and if Henry Wallace were to imagine a socialist society, would it not be very much like Stalinist Russia?

YET, it may be asked, don't such "tolerance" novels serve *some* useful purpose, if only because they are on the right side of the fence?

Today, however, there seems to be more than one fence; our life is far more complex than, say, the life of the generation that was agitated by the issue of chattel slavery. Then the issue was simple: should men be allowed to own other men?—and when Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* she did so from a secure assumption of what a man should be. That her novel was bad was, under the circumstances, of secondary importance. But now, it is essential to recognize, the situation is far more difficult. The pressures generated by a society in decay threaten the very right of individual existence, and thereby also art. Against this danger the "tolerance" novels, precisely because they are bad novels, can strike no blows. They neither heighten the reader's sensibility, as does a genuine work of art, nor explain the workings of the public world, as does a good sociological study. They do not help us to cope with either our inner being or the outer world.

I think the reader can find no better proof of this than by making a simple test for him-

self. Read one, any one of these "tolerance" novels and then read a serious novel on a similar theme, Saul Bellow's *The Victim*. (I deliberately suggest a novel by a young, little known writer so that no one will be awed in advance by his name.) See how in *The Victim* the writer's imagination is at work, struggling to mold its materials according to the contours of both complex experience and the needs of the novel form. See how the anti-Semitic theme is here not a mere juxtaposition of simple categories but is rather developed into a life situation at once painful and credible. *The Victim* is in no way a great novel, it is not even near greatness, but between it and any of these five novels there is all the difference between a striving towards the freshness of art and the weary mediocrity of the popular novel as it is written in America today—the difference between creativity and sterility.

Chinese Melting Pot

PEONY. By PEARL BUCK. New York, John Day, 1940. 312 pp. \$3.00.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

LIBERALISM's kindest error is its overanxious leap from the concrete to the general. Concreteness is always involved in our interest in individuals, but the liberal, in his response to larger groups, likes to depend upon whatever in them is "essentially" human, or French, or Jewish. Such squeamish patronage leads Pearl Buck to describe Judaism in her novel as an intense disembodied force with no reference to the natural manifestations of an ethnic culture or to the actual lively surface of Jewish life.

Peony delicately alludes to the symbolic peeled hard-boiled eggs in salt water, bitter herbs, silver candlesticks,—and reverently celebrates the Jewish spirit. But apparently no Jew in the northern Chinese province of Honan was known to enjoy a shrug of the shoulders, an abstract argument, or a good kosher meal. The same indiscriminate pity that causes Sartre to believe that the "authentic Jew," regardless of his individual condition, must consciously lead the life of a martyr, also feeds Miss Buck's conception of the Jewish religion as exclusively burden and stricture.

Her novel takes its story from the arresting historical fact that China has for centuries

composedly absorbed all its alien races. The mystique of the woman's magazine demands that the power behind all power be ultimately feminine, and the willing instrument of history is in this case a pink-cheeked, rice-powdered Chinese bondsmaid in the house of Ezra, a Jewish importer. Peony has her eye on the son of the house, but class distinction prevents marriage, as religion does concubinage, forcing her into the kind of prudent compromise which Miss Buck thinks of as indigenously Chinese. She whips up David's interest in a pliable Chinese girl who will at least not threaten her present secure status. Since David has developed an environmental preference for small girls with flat noses, it looks in the demure early section of the book, as if a little poetry and Peony can easily accomplish his seduction to China.

But at this point, the Jewish will to survive flares up: Madame Ezra introduces a rabbi's daughter who represents the passion and dedication of the Jew, Ezra's partner brings home a sword by which his people died in Western pogroms—and two races struggle for the body of David.

The Chinese ends in the ascendancy, chiefly through the simplistic way in which Miss Buck has counterposed racial qualities: Jewish rigidity and fanaticism against Chinese moderation; Jewish sorrow against Chinese sensuality; the Jews as "a people bemused with God" against the Chinese contentment with "simple pleasures of the earth"; the prophet's vindictive "And thou shalt stone him with stones that he die, because he sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God" against the Chinese Christian "To repay evil with kindness is the proof of a good man." No doubt there were Orthodox Jews in China who reacted bitterly to the decay of their synagogue and the indifference of their children. Still, for the justice of the parable, they would have to be compared with Chinese Buddhists rather than with those educated only in the rationalist doctrines of Confucius. The latter would more properly be comparable to the secular Jewish community, about which Miss Buck has nothing to say.

SHE suggests that the lore and practice of the Chinese community spoke more powerfully to the Jewish imagination both on aesthetic and philosophical levels than their own tradition, that the result was a virtual disappear-

ance of Judaism, and that this was universally a good thing, as a precedent for the gradual obliteration of all racial differences, and was specifically in China the only tactful tribute that could be paid to a country which had been so considerate toward Jews.

If there is something in Chinese thought and temperament that has made them uniquely unsusceptible to anti-Semitic feeling, it deserves Jewish respect and Occidental emulation. But there must be some better tribute than the destruction of a historical and communal identity and the creation of a vacuum. Miss Buck invokes a consoling dialectic to show us that assimilation is negation for a productive purpose. "Wherever a statesman stands most honorable, a judge most just," so Peony rationalizes her successful influence on David, "there is one; where a scholar is most learned, there is one; where a woman is both beautiful and wise, there is one. Their blood is lively in whatever frame it flows. . . . Their spirit is born anew in every generation. They are no more and yet they live forever."

This is almost too generous and, more pertinently, is not the only way in which people can appreciate one another. The harmony of a canvas does not depend upon the transformation of all reds, blues, and yellows into muddy brown, and it is not impossible to respond to the idiom of two languages. Miss Buck's first interest has always been to attack racial discrimination and it is perhaps understandable that in her singlemindedness she has not been able to see that there are values to be lost in the surrender of a particular culture, that communities reciprocally stimulate through differentiation, and that human beings are most often pleasing in their eccentricity.

Liberal Justice

SELECTED WRITINGS OF BENJAMIN NATHAN CARDOZO. Edited by Margaret E. Hall. New York, Fallon Publications, 1947. 456 pp. \$5.00.

Reviewed by DANIEL J. BOORSTIN

DURING the last several decades this country has witnessed the growth of a worship of great judges that has, at times, taken on the proportions of a cult. The group surrounding and succeeding Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes have become the church fathers of inarticulate

liberals; their writings have become sacred books. At the same time that the cult of the great judge has been developing, a growing disrespect for the idea and institutions of law has flourished. It is toward an understanding of this paradox that Margaret E. Hall's handy collection of the extra-judicial utterances of Justice Cardozo makes its contribution.

From this point of view Cardozo's writings have a special significance. The other "liberal" justices would have been remembered had they never sat on the bench: Holmes was a notable historian, Brandeis a practitioner and man of affairs, Frankfurter (assuming that he may be included as a "liberal") a councillor of state. But Cardozo's career was that of the judge pure and simple; and he is often considered the most reflective and most articulate of the group.

Since this volume contains none of Justice Cardozo's judicial opinions, it is of course an unfair sample of his writing. His decisions in torts, criminal law, and constitutional law are among the wisest and most closely reasoned in American legal reports. Yet in one way at least the omission of his judicial opinions makes Miss Hall's collection the more illuminating. Here is Justice Cardozo's *philosophy* of law. In this book we see the separation of his principles of social philosophy from his decision of specific legal cases. The pragmatic school, of which Cardozo is a member, has usually argued the impossibility of separating the theory from the practice of judicial decision. But this does not exempt the pragmatic school from judgment as legal philosophers. The non-judicial writings of judges—like those selected in this volume—are those most widely read by laymen. It is often through these writings that a judge's ideas and assumptions become part of the life and thought of the community.

Now, about a quarter-century after the first publication of Justice Cardozo's main essays on jurisprudence, they seem inadequate as a foundation for legal philosophy. One cannot fail to be impressed by the seriousness—the solemnity, even—of their tone. But they are actually a sociology of the judicial process which holds itself out as a philosophy of law; and the one will not do for the other.

CARDOZO's principal concern, in such works as "The Nature of the Judicial Process" and "The Growth of the Law" which are included in this volume, is to explain how the judge

shapes legal doctrine to whatever ends he has chosen. With a felicity of phrase and an aptness in the choice of examples, though in a style often mannered and diluted, Cardozo tells us the methods of reasoning available to the judge according to the accepted rules of his profession. He describes the consequences ensuing for the law, from an emphasis on precedent or tradition, on logic or doctrinal symmetry, or on economics. He explains in a balanced and mellow fashion why the judge is not an automaton. More convincingly than do the Marxists, the behaviorists, and the neo- and pseudo-Freudians, he explains how the statement of the law is affected by what the judge is and feels as well as by what he knows.

Such an emphasis helped bring to an end an era when the highest courts had too often confused the prejudices of an economic aristocracy with moral and legal absolutes. But, measured even by this purpose, Cardozo's essays lack the subtlety or brilliance found in the writings of William James and Justice Holmes; and they seldom rise above the limitations of their time and place.

Again and again he emphasizes the role of the judge as the servant of social flux. "The good of one generation," Cardozo remarks, "is not always the good of its successor. For the lawyer as for the moralist, the generalizations that result from the study of social phenomena are 'not fixed rules for deciding doubtful cases, but instrumentalities for their investigation, methods by which the value of past experience is rendered available for present scrutiny of new perplexities.'"

When Cardozo comes to the values to be served by the law, he customarily makes his bow to the needs for stability, predictability, certainty, or commercial convenience, but beyond that he does little more than urge the individual judge to try conscientiously to express the prevalent values of the community: "Read such a book as the *Rise of the American Civilization*, by Charles and Mary Beard, and see how the surge of social forces has swept aside the little eddies of faction, the currents of party politics, or caught them in its larger movements. Measures the most distinctive and important have taken form in obedience to a pressure that has overwhelmed the lines of sect or party; they are the emanation of a will which has become composite and impersonal. Not less clamorous at times is the summons

to the courts to scan the scroll of life and announce their readings to the world."

The study of values is relegated to a science of "axiology" which is regarded almost tolerantly as a technical exercise of philosophers. Meanwhile the judge is warned to "beware of an axiology that is merely personal and subjective." "The judge is to give effect in general not to his own scale of values, but to the scale of values revealed to him in his readings of the social mind." This, according to Cardozo, is apparently the only alternative to an undisciplined subjectivism.

In the last several decades the pragmatic concept of law, which insists that legal rules are primarily, if not exclusively, the servants of short-run social needs, has become increasingly accepted both here and abroad. In practice, this has usually meant putting the concepts and institutions of law in the service of the group controlling the instruments of political power. The most extreme effects of such a practice are underlined dramatically when a fascist or a Soviet régime dissolves law into a mere instrument of policy. Anyone who has observed first-hand the activities of many young New Deal lawyers (who had been educated to believe that pragmatism would do for a philosophy if not for a religion) must be impressed by the cynicism and corrosive relativism bred by an immoderate emphasis on the instrumental aspect of law. Such an emphasis, even in this country, has sometimes come close to making law an instrument by which political parties remain in power.

Yet by now we should be able to see, still more vividly than twenty-five years ago when Cardozo wrote, that the idea of law itself is a fundamental value of our civilization. The inviolability of the individual and the idea of his natural rights and duties are not likely to be buttressed without a firm belief in precepts which transcend current social policy. It is for this reason that we today feel the urgency of a philosophy of law. On the path to such a philosophy the essays of Cardozo shed little light.

This volume, together with what else we know of the great judge, gives us evidence that a sensitive and reflective mind like Cardozo's cannot help suspect the inadequacy of his own pragmatically-oriented philosophy. He shows this in several ways: in the highly eclectic character of his writing, tending to burden

his pages with references to undistinguished and often superfluous "learned" authorities, and to bolster his own observations by cliché quotations from James Russell Lowell, Matthew Arnold, or Charles Lamb; in the stiff and self-conscious style, which often seems to supplant form for content, and which issues again and again in bombast or purple passages: "To the lips of eager youth comes at times the halting doubt whether law in its study and its profession can fill the need for what is highest in the yearnings of the human spirit. Thus challenged, I do not argue. I point the challenger to Holmes." Or, as he remarks on the common-law oath for grand-jurors: "Like the tones of a mighty bell, these echoing notes of adjuration bring back our straying thoughts to sanctity and service."

It is disconcerting to see the role of the judge played so perfectly and with so little individual flavor. And doubly so when the reverence which the man inspires lacks its proper counterpart in the outlines of the object to which he has dedicated himself. The judge who calls attention to himself rather than to the law, is like the poet who makes us remark on how poetically he writes. In both cases the artist stands in the way of the object. One has the feeling, as with Holmes—and in both cases perhaps unjustly—of a man of limited human experience and emotional capacity, a limitation which must have been accentuated by long years of judicial decorum and detachment.

It would be hard to imagine a more un-Talmudic mind than that which appears in these pages. Nowhere do we find a sturdy irony or a convincing sense of the inscrutable. Cardozo's talents and his personal frailties gave him a special need for the resources of a tradition. His essays show that while he felt the magnificence of the common-law tradition, this was for him a technical and professional matter; he was less happy and less secure still in his choice of a philosophic and literary tradition. His commencement address to the graduating rabbis of the Jewish Institute of Religion in 1931 exhorts the graduates to go forth as "preachers of the eternal values." But the title of his speech is "The Choice of Tycho Brahe,"—taken from a poem by Alfred Noyes which he quotes extensively. It is small wonder that his exhortation should be pallid and unconvincing when his very vocabulary and his allusions show how thoroughly he had abjured the tradi-

tional resources closest to him which might have given him a point from which to begin his own philosophizing. He found himself instead drawing on the bathos of his contemporaries. The common law and Anglo-American *belles lettres* inevitably provided only a partial resource for answering the basic questions of law and life.

If the cult of the judge has flourished among liberals uncertain of their belief, Cardozo's writings may suggest an explanation: here too was a man better than his philosophy.

Arab vs. Jew: Homogenized

I NEVER SAW AN ARAB LIKE HIM. By JAMES MAXWELL. Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1948. 207 pp. \$2.50.

Reviewed by ANATOLE BROYARD

AS THE land of technical genius, America has perfected millions of pleasure-giving, work-saving devices—smooth-riding cars, static-free radios, automatic washing machines, and so on indefinitely. It seems only natural then that Americans should have perfected a style of writing compatible with these mechanical conveniences—a style also mechanical, smooth, without static, full of devices, laundered of all distressing odors and smudges, etc.

Mr. Maxwell's stories are a good example. They are about the last days of the recent war, as seen through the eyes of an army intelligence agent in North Africa. According to the blurb on the jacket, they are supposed to give us insights into our political maladies. Instead, the author stays true to the "take it easy and you'll live longer" tradition. He treats his subject with a bedside manner and various placebos, but no strong medicine, no fever charts, and no insights (except, inadvertently, into himself).

Make no demands. Don't be a bore. These are Mr. Maxwell's guiding principles—a post-Hemingway, Emily Post, post-no-bills conception of fiction. And, indeed, he is as solicitous as a waiter in serving up these stories. They're all à la carte. The moral is optional. If you think it will give you indigestion, you can skip it.

But for all their studied credibility, and the homogenized, nothing-out-of-the-ordinary realism of their carefully contrived anti-climaxes, Mr. Maxwell's minimal fictions are still un-

convincing. The North African Jew in this book, for instance, is a hollow cliché: patient, philosophical, studious, much given to ceremony, quiet wisdom, and self-definition, he seems bloodlessly un-human and abstract. The one American Jew, Dave Goldstein, is an easy-going "Whaddya want from me?" ex-football player, who, when finally insulted by an Italian, becomes a great juggernaut of righteousness.

Mr. Maxwell's Arab too, is a parody. The sarcastic title is taken from the story of an Arab who liked to work. All the other Arabs are unhygienic persons, thieves, horse-beaters, castrators, fanatics, etc. Except one: in an obvious attempt to give a "well-rounded" picture, the author portrays a "good Arab." No, not a dead one—he's a newspaper editor, a derailed romantic who translates Arabian poetry, an impotent Hamlet who joins a fanatic nationalist group out of neurotic desperation for a cause.

Then there's an American fascist, Fuller, who really provides us with the perfect example of the sophisticated style at work solving problems. This typical mid-Western fascist (all three terms are, of course, pejorative), after insulting the Jewish troglodytes (crossing invisible ceremonial lines, refusing to drink out of a "filthy" ceremonial cup, etc.), finally gets sick (I mean *pukes*) as a result of drinking from his own flask. Here is the symbol of symbols: alcohol as the great American disinfectant! It cures everything—even fascism! Reading this story—and, in fact, this book—one gets a vivid impression of America as a huge balanced aquarium floating in alcohol.

Just for a finishing touch, Mr. Maxwell's first person hero appends a little personal peroration over the end of the war (which he celebrates, incidentally, with a bottle of Black and White Scotch). It seems he can't really feel the end of the war. In a philosophical *post coitum triste* mood, he tells us that it only reminds him of his wife, Helen, and his prospective mistress, Peggy. And the tone in which he makes these remarks shows, unmistakably, that he expects us to agree with him; he expects his confession to be met with sympathetic, mutually-recognizing cries of "Me too!"

The jacket of *I Never Saw An Arab Like Him* tells us, among other things, that Mr. Maxwell "likes his whiskey with a little water." Perhaps he likes his stories a little

watered too—that's his privilege—but, as a would-be commentator in a world desperately trying to keep its head above water, he could meet his responsibility far more effectively by serving them up straight.

The Prophetic Élan

CHARLES PÉGUY. By DANIEL HALÉVY.
New York; Longmans, Green, 1947.
304 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by OSKAR SEIDLIN

IN FRANCE'S darkest hours during the recent war, the memory of Charles Péguy, one of the earliest casualties of World War I, was revived as a rallying symbol. His fervent and exalted poems, his *Mystères* in praise of Joan of Arc, though hardly noticed when originally published before 1914, had in the 20's already established him among the most eminent literary figures of our century. But it was a whole man, not only as poet alone, that Péguy inspired Frenchmen in their deepest distress and became their guide on the road to moral and political recovery. For better or worse, the vitality and the age-old traditions of France, often obscured by the urban cosmopolitanism and refinement of Paris, found their most powerful and attractive voice in him.

Péguy came from the French countryside, from the midlands of the Loire, and although he attended the École Normale, settled in Paris, and for ten years edited a leading French literary magazine, *Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine*, he remained a French peasant at heart. He was a prominent socialist in his youth, but as soon as socialism's revolutionary drive became identified with a political party he violently attacked his former friends and associates, Jean Jaurès, Lucien Herr, and Léon Blum. During the Dreyfus affair he led his followers out into the street to fight for the rehabilitation of the Jewish captain; yet he loathed politics and the very idea of the state. He became a devout Catholic and did much by his writing and example to spread the revival of Catholicism in France in our century; yet he remained extraordinarily undogmatic and independent. Basically an anarchist and devoted to the *élan vital* of his beloved master Henry Bergson, he loved passionately the genuine and elemental emotions

of the people, *his* people, and was equally passionate in his hatred of all the superstructures, organizations, parties, and governmental bodies that he saw calcifying the *élan vital* of France.

PÉGUY's patriotism brought him into close association with such belligerent preachers of nationalism as Sorel, Maurras, and Barrès. He never had the slightest doubt that the French were a nation chosen by God—and in his poetry he has God himself say so, bluntly and repeatedly. His hatred of internationalism of any kind was such that he could exult extravagantly when he heard—in 1914—that Jean Jaurès had been assassinated and that, with this foul murder, the last obstacle to war had been removed. With all the praiseworthy traits of the French peasants—sturdiness, integrity, enthusiasm—Péguy combined the repellent ones: lack of balance, nationalist arrogance, and a narrow-mindedness in politics that made his interpretation of French history dangerous and, at times, ludicrous. And it may well be that the present Péguy revival owes its impulse to these less attractive features.

Daniel Halévy, Péguy's present biographer, seems to be entirely unaware of them. His book is the work of a devotee, a personal admirer of long standing, to whom his subject means so much that he cannot attempt a critical appraisal. Thus what he offers in this portrait is intimacy rather than understanding, warmth rather than clarity. The fascination that brought people under Péguy's spell is effectively transmitted to the reader. But when it comes to interpreting Péguy's poetry and philosophy, Mr. Halévy can only rhapsodize on the rhapsodist of "*la douce France*." And it is particularly annoying that he can treat the many struggles and controversies in which Péguy took part with such obvious glee only as a partisan and not as an arbiter. All Péguy's opponents are seen through Péguy's own eyes, and even such a generous friend as Romain Rolland, who by his unselfish devotion saved Péguy and his magazine from financial ruin, gets nothing but bad marks because his literary fame overshadowed Péguy's during the period of their collaboration on *Les Cahiers*. If the *élan vital* only too often led Péguy into dangerous paths, emotional *élan* leads his biographer into too many blind alleys.

Carrying the Torch for Liberty

I LIFT MY LAMP. By HERTHA PAULI and E. B. ASHTON. New York, Appleton-Century Crofts, 1948. 360 pp. \$4.00.

Reviewed by JAMES RORTY

THE Statue of Liberty is not a military objective. Hence it is probable that in the event of an atomic war the first lady of Bedloe's Island would continue to lift her lamp above the radio-active rubble of Manhattan, Brooklyn, and New Jersey, with majestic irrelevance, just as the pyramids still wedge their claims to immortality into the desert sky above Egypt.

It is equally probable that the ugly bronze colossus—conceivably it imaged the sculptor Bartholdi's revolt against his too-possessive Mom who delayed his marriage—would be conscripted immediately for new symbolic uses. Doubtless the masters of the surviving global tyranny would plaster it with posters and herd the "progressive democratic forces" in politically chaperoned groups of fifty up the stairs to the observation platform, there to scan the glories of the state that would be allegedly theirs.

The authors of *I Lift My Lamp* spare us this morbid flight of fancy. But they do not fail to exploit the ironies of their theme. Symbols are uncomfortably dynamic, they point out; the difficulty is to keep them tied to the realities they are supposed to exalt and inspire.

The book is an interesting compilation, completely documented and written. Frequently it threatens to achieve more than the destiny that now seems likely to overtake it: that of serving as an enlightening souvenir book for sale to pilgrims to the Statue. Thousands of people will doubtless come to read the book in this way, and a good thing too, since it is politically much more honest and intelligent than one had any right to expect, popular education being what it is. If it disappoints in critical spots, as it does, that is seemingly because the authors quailed at the opportunity to write another great essay on liberty, that being what our time is badly in need of.

I Lift My Lamp is not that. But at worst the authors leave the accumulated clutter of Liberty's ideological baggage no worse

confused than they found it. And every now and then they give us clarifying facts and insights.

Two important Jewish figures made early and major contributions to the protean vitality of the symbol. One of them was Joseph Pulitzer, whose *New York World* declared the People in on the Statue, launched a campaign to raise dollars and dimes to build the required pedestal on Bedloe's Island, and jibed at the stingy plutocrats who had let the enterprise languish. The other was Emma Lazarus, who so effectively idealized America's open door, at least one of whose hinges was our capitalism's need of cheap labor during the period of westward expansion:

... and her name
 Mother of Exiles. From her beacon hand
 Glows world-wide welcome: her wild eyes
 command
 The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
 "Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
 cries she
 With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your
 poor,
 Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
 The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
 Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
 I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

Mother of exiles? But that wasn't the original idea, as it flashed into the mind of the commission-seeking Bartholdi, listening to the after-dinner rhetoric of Eduard de Laboulaye, the leading French Abolitionist and Americanophile of his day. For understandable reasons, Professor Laboulaye found it more congenial to love freedom in America than to fight the police and censors of the Second Empire in France. Laboulaye and his liberal friends were in fact the only Frenchmen in a position to talk about freedom at all, the socialists and anarchists being then in jail, in enforced retirement, or—some of them—fighting in the Union ranks against the revolting slaveholders of the Confederacy and with Juarez in Mexico against Louis Napoleon's puppet Maximilian.

Laboulaye was the chairman of the French Anti-Slavery Society, the correspondent of Lincoln and Sumner, and the friend of the American minister, John Bigelow. He and his left-of-center Republican associates backed

the Union through the Civil War, and mourned the death of Lincoln, as did the French masses. But remembering Robespierre's guillotine they took a dim view of democracy at home and inclined to agree with Thiers when he spoke of "the vile multitude."

The occasion that gave birth to Laboulaye's Great Idea was a gathering of notables at his country place in Glatigny in the summer of 1865. The focus of the discussion was Mexico; Napoleon's man Maximilian was on the run and it was apparent that France would have to abandon him or fight General Sheridan's army.

Laboulaye made a speech invoking the memory of Lafayette. America loved France, he said, despite the unfortunate language of General Sheridan. And Professor Laboulaye loved America. Frenchmen and Americans remember common glories.

"The feeling honors Americans," he said, "as well as us, and if a monument should rise in the United States, as a memorial to their independence, I should think it only natural if it were built by united effort—a common work of both our nations."

That was enough for the attentive M. Bartholdi, who was already well established in the monument business, specializing in size. Liberty was launched upon her chequered career, in Bartholdi's mind at least, although nothing much happened about the monument for the next five years. The Franco-Prussian war intervened. Bartholdi, descendant of the Alsatian Revolutionary hero, General Bysser, fought with the Alsatian national guard and with his people experienced the grim realities of defeat, conquest, and the extinction of some of their political and social liberties. German *Pickelhauben* patrolled the streets of Bartholdi's native Comar and German censors read his mail.

MEANWHILE liberty flamed in Paris, but too dangerously for the taste of the French liberals. The Communards fought for their excessive notions of freedom and lost—with Bartholdi, Laboulaye, and their friends anxiously on the side of the Versailles. On June 8, 1871, the day Paris watched the great funeral of the twenty-seven victims of the Commune, Bartholdi sailed for America bearing letters of introduction from Labou-

aye to American notables who might help promote the monument idea. In a few years America would be celebrating the centennial of her successful revolutionary struggle. Only when aged by a century and removed by three thousand miles of water did freedom become a practicable subject for the French monumental sculptor's art.

The tale of Bartholdi's American adventures is told with insight and humor. Early in the game he discovered the phenomenon of American civic pride. Thereafter, whenever his campaign for the monument lagged he played Philadelphia against New York and Boston against both; none of them seemed to want Liberty very much until one of the others showed signs of competitive interest. Long before the project came to fruition the original Abolitionist Republicans who had sponsored the Statue had either changed parties or aligned themselves openly with the forces of social and political reaction. While the orphaned colossus rose grotesquely above the roofs of a Paris suburb, as helpless as the egg unlaidd, the American committee begged five hundred dollars from Carnegie and five thousand dollars from the House of Morgan; ten years later Carnegie gave one hundred thousand dollars and Morgan a quarter of a million to fatten Mark Hanna's slush

fund and defeat Freedom's tribune in the person of William Jennings Bryan; and Pulitzer's *World* was against liberty, too, Pulitzer being a plutocrat himself by that time.

When Liberty was at last unveiled in October 1886, it was seemingly the poor people who cared most about her, perhaps because they had greater experience of her absence.

"Look at them run to the waterfront for a glimpse of the Statue," wrote the Cuban poet and patriot José Martí. "Happy as castaways who think they glimpsed a sail. They are the dregs, who shun the crowded streets and well-dressed people—pale ragpickers, lightermen, hunchbacks, Italian women with dotted shawls, gathering from East and West, from the narrow, teeming streets in the poorest parts of town."

If there is a law that controls the evolution of symbols it would seem to be that they are possessed and used, in the end, by those who need them most. If that is so, then the colossus of New York harbor will never lack foster parents and her future will be as serviceable and as genuinely enlightening as her past. To Laboulaye and to Bartholdi therefore we owe a very real gratitude. It was a bad statue but a good idea. Long may she stand and shine.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

IRVING HOWE wrote "Daniel Fuchs: Escape from Williamsburg," and "Spruceton Jewry Adjusts Itself" in recent issues of COMMENTARY. ISA KAPP has written for the *New York Times Book Review* and other publications.

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN is an Assistant Professor of Social and Legal History on the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He has written *The Mysterious Science of the Law* and *The Lost World of Thomas*

Jefferson, which is to be published by Henry Holt this fall.

ANATOLE BROYARD will lecture on writing at the Rand School of Social Science in New York this fall.

OSKAR SEIDLIN teaches in the Department of German at Ohio State University.

JAMES RORTY is now in Tennessee, where he has been studying and writing about the Tennessee Valley Authority.

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